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Literature and Language

Julia: or, the new Eloisa. A series of original letters, collected and published by J. J. Rousseau. Translated from the French. In three volumes. ... Volume 2 of 3

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

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THE

WORKS

OF

J. J. ROUSSEAU.

Tranſlated from the FRENCH.

IN TEN VOLUMES.

VOLUME the SECOND.

EDINBURGH.
Printed for J. BELL, J. DICKSON,
and C. ELLIOT.
M DCC.LXXIII.

JULIA:

OR,

The NEW ELOISA.

VOL. II.

JULIA:

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MDCCLXXIII

JULIA;

OR,

The NEW ELOISA.

LETTER LXXX.

From JULIA.

YES, my friend, we ſhall continue to be united, notwithſtanding our ſeparation, we ſhall be happy in ſpite of fortune. It is the union of minds which conſtitutes their true felicity; the mutual attraction of hearts does not follow the *ratio* of their diſtance, and ours would be in contact were they as diſtant from each other as the two poles of the globe. I am ſenſible with you, that true lovers have a thouſand expedients to ſoothe the pains of abſence, and to fly to each others arms in a moment. Hence have they more frequent interviews even in abſence than when they ſee each other every day, for no ſooner is either alone, than they are both together. If you, my friend, can taſte that pleaſure every evening, I feaſt on it a hundred times a-day I am more alone, and am ſurrounded by objects I cannot look on without calling you to mind, without finding you ever near me.

Quì canto dolcemente, e quì s'aſſiſe
Quì ſi rivolſe, e quì ritenne il paſſo,

Quì

Quì co 'begli occhi me trafiſe il core ·
Quì diſſe una parola, e quì ſorriſe

Each well-know object, left behind,
Recalls my lover to my mind
'Twas here, I cry, he ſat and ſung,
While fondly on his lips I hung,
Here kindly ſpoke, here ſweetly ſmil'd,
And there his looks my heart beguil'd.

But is it ſo with you? can you thus alleviate the pains of abſence? can you experience the ſweets of a peaceful and tender paſſion, that ſpeaks to the heart without inflaming the ſenſes? Are your griefs at preſent more prudent than were formerly your deſires? The violence of your firſt letter ſtill makes me tremble. I dread thoſe deceitful tranſports, by ſo much the more dangerous, as the imagination which excites them is the leſs ſubject to controul; and, I fear, leſt even your exceſs of love ſhould prove injurious to the object of it Alas! you perceive not—the indelicacy of your ſenſations hinders you from perceiving—how offenſive to love is an irrational homage. You do not conſider that your life is mine, nor that ſelf-preſervation leads us frequently to deſtruction. Senſual man! will you never learn to love? Call to mind thoſe peaceful, thoſe tender ſenſations you once felt, and ſo affectingly deſcribed If ſuch be the higheſt pleaſures which even happy lovers can taſte, they are the only ones wherein thoſe who pine in abſence are permitted to indulge themſelves, and thoſe who once have felt them, tho' but for a moment, ſhould never regret the loſs of any other. I remember the reflections we made

made in reading your Plutarch, on the ſenſuality and depravity of taſte, which debaſe our nature. Were ſuch wretched pleaſures attended only with the circumſtance of their not being mutual, it were enough, we ſaid to render them inſipid and contemptible The ſame concluſion is applicable to the ſallies of an extravagant imagination What can the wretch enjoy whoſe pleaſures are confined to himſelf alone? his pleaſures are lifeleſs, but thine, O love! are animated and generous delights. It is the union of ſouls · we receive more pleaſure from that which we excite, than from our own enjoyment.

But, pray tell me, my friend, in what language, or rather in what jargon, is the deſcription you give me in your laſt letter? Did you not make uſe of it as an occaſional diſplay of your wit? If you intend to repeat it in your letters to me, it will be neceſſary to ſend me a dictionary. What is it you mean by the opinion of a garb? by a conſcience that is to be put off and on like a livery? by laying down maxims by the rod? How would you have a poor ſimple Swiſs comprehend thoſe ſublime tropes and figures? Have you not already borrowed ſome of the tinſel underſtanding of the people you deſcribe? Take care, my good friend, how you proceed Do you not think the metaphors of the chevalier Marini, which you have ſo often laughed at, bear ſome reſemblance to your own? If a garment may be ſaid to think in a letter, why not that fire may ſweat in a ſonnet *?

To

* *Sudate, O fochi, a preparar metalli*
Ye ſweating fires, that in the furnace blaze
A line of a ſonnet by Marini

To obſerve in the ſpace of three weeks all the different company that is kept in a great city, to paſs judgment on their converſation; to diſtinguiſh preciſely the falſe from the true, the real from the affected, the difference between their thoughts and words; this is the very thing for which the French are frequently cenſured by people of other countries; but this nation eſpecially deſerves to be ſtudied more at leiſure I as little approve alſo of perſons ſpeaking ill of a country where they reſide and are well received: they had better, in my judgment, ſubmit to be deceived by appearances, than to moralize at the expence of their hoſts. In ſhort, I always ſuſpect the candour of thoſe obſervers who ſet up for wits: I cannot but be apprehenſive leaſt they ſhould inſenſibly ſacrifice the real ſtate of things to the arts of deſcription, and affect a brilliancy of ſtyle at the expence of truth.

You know, my friend, the ſaying of Muralt, that wit is the epidemical madneſs of the French. I am miſtaken if I do not diſcover ſome marks of your being yourſelf infected with this phrenzy; with this difference, however, that while it is agreeable enough in the French, the Swiſs are of all people in the world thoſe whom it becomes leaſt. There is ſomething very quaint and farfetched in many paſſages of your letter. I ſpeak not of the lively turn, or animated expreſſions, which are dictated by any peculiar ſtrength of ſentiments; but of that affected prettineſs of ſtyle, which, being unnatural in itſelf, can be natural to no people whatever, but betrays the abſurd pretenſions of the perſon who uſes it. Pretenſions with thoſe we love, good God!

ought

ought not all our pretenſions to be confined to the object beloved? It may be permitted to enliven an indifferent converſation with ſuch rhetorical flouriſhes, and they may paſs off as fine ſtrokes of wit, but this is not the language adapted to the intercourſe of lovers; the florid jargon of gallantry comes leſs from the heart than the moſt rude and ſimple of all dialects. I appeal to yourſelf Did wit ever find an opportunity to intrude into our private parties? If thoſe fond, thoſe endearing converſations had a charm to diſpel and keep wit at a diſtance, how ill-ſuited are its embelliſhments to the letters of abſence, always clouded in ſome meaſure with ſorrow, and in which the heart expreſſes itſelf with peculiar tenderneſs? But, though every paſſion truly great ſhould be ſerious, exceſs of joy ſooner calling forth our tears than our ſmiles, I would not have love be always ſad; its chearfulneſs ſhould, nevertheleſs, be ſimple and unaffected, without art, without embelliſhment, and undiſſembled as the paſſion itſelf In a word, I would have love appear in its native graces, and not in the falſe ornaments of wit

My *conſtant companion*, in whoſe apartment I write this letter, pretends, that in the beginning of it I had juſt that pleaſantry of diſpoſition which love inſpires, but I know not what is become of it. In proportion as I proceed, a certain languor invades my heart, and barely leaves me ſpirits to write the reproaches ſhe would have me make you For you are to know the above hypercriticiſms are rather her's than my own It was ſhe that dictated in particular the firſt article, laughing like an idiot, and inſiſting on my

my not altering a ſingle ſyllable. She ſays, it is to teach you to reſpect Marini, whom ſhe patroniſes, and you have the preſumption to ridicule.

But can you gueſs the cauſe of our good humour? it is her approaching marriage The contract was ſigned laſt night, and the day is fixed for Monday ſevennight. If ever love was a gay paſſion, it is ſurely ſo with her ſurely no girl was ever ſo droll upon the like occaſion.

The good Mr Orbe, whoſe head is alſo a little turned, was highly delighted with the comical manner in which he was received. Leſs difficult to be pleaſed than you were, he takes great pleaſure in adding to the pleaſantry of courtſhip, and looks upon the art of diverting his miſtreſs as a maſter-piece in making love. For her part, we may talk to her as we pleaſe of decorum, tell her as much as we will of the grave and ſerious turn ſhe ought to aſſume on the point of matrimony, and of doing honour to the virgin-ſtate ſhe is going to quit, ſhe laughs at all we can ſay, as ridiculous grimace, and tells Mr Orbe to his face, that on the wedding-day ſhe ſhall be in the beſt humour in the world, and that one cannot go too chearfully to be married. But the little diſſembler does not tell all, I ſurpriſed her this morning wiping her eyes, which were red with crying, and I would lay a wager, the tears of the night equal the ſmiles of the day She is going to bind herſelf in new chains, that will relax the gentle ties of friendſhip; ſhe is entering on a manner of life very different from that which ſhe moſt affected. Hitherto always pleaſed and tranquil, ſhe is going

ing to run thoſe hazards which are inſeparable from the beſt marriage, and, whatever face ſhe may aſſume, I ſee, that, as a clear and ſmooth water begins to be troubled at the approach of a ſtorm, ſo her chaſte and timid heart feels an alarm at her approaching change of condition

May they be happy, my dear friend! They love, and will be united in marriage: they will reap the tranſports of mutual enjoyment without obſtacles, without fear, without remorſe! Adieu, my heart is full—I can write no more.

P S We have ſeen Lord B———, but he was in ſuch haſte to proceed on his journey, that he ſtaid with us but a moment Impreſſed with a due ſenſe of the obligations we owe him, I would have made him my acknowledgments and yours, but, I know not how, I was aſhamed It is ſurely a kind of inſult offered to his unparalleled generoſity to thank ſuch a man for any thing!

LETTER LXXXI

To JULIA

WHAT children does the impetuoſity of our paſſions make of us! how readily does an extravagant affection nouriſh itſelf on chimeras! and how eaſily are our too violent deſires prevented by the moſt frivolous objects! I received your letter with as much rapture as your preſence could have inſpired in the exceſs of my

tranſport, a piece of folded paper ſupplying in my mind the place of Julia. One of the greateſt evils of abſence, and the only one which reaſon cannot alleviate, is the inquietude we ſuffer concerning the actual ſtate of the perſon we love Her health, her life, her repoſe, her affections, nothing eſcapes the apprehenſions of him who has every thing to loſe. Nor are we more certain of the preſent condition than of the future, and every poſſible action is realized in the mind of the timid lover. I breathe, and am alive again You are in health, and ſtill love me, or rather ten days ago you loved me, and was well, but who can aſſure me it is ſo at this inſtant? How cruel, how tormenting is abſence! how capricious is that ſituation in which we can enjoy only the paſt moment, for the future is not yet arrived!

Although you had ſaid nothing about your *conſtant companion*, I ſhould have detected her little malice in the cenſures paſſed on my obſervations, and her old grudge in the apology for Murini; but if it be permitted me in turn to apologiſe for myſelf, I will not make her wait for a reply.

In the firſt place then, my dear couſin, (for it is to her I ſhould addreſs my anſwer,) as to the ſtyle of my remarks, I have adopted that of the ſubject I endeavoured to give you at once both an idea and an example of the mode of converſation in faſhion; and thus, following an ancient precept, I wrote to you in the ſame manner they talk in ſome companies to each other. Beſides, it is not the uſe of rhetorical figures, but the choice of them, which I blame in Marini

If

If a man has the leaſt warmth of imagination, he muſt neceſſarily uſe metaphors and figurative expreſſions to make himſelf be underſtood. Even your own letters are full of them, without your knowing it, and I will maintain it, that none but a geometrician, or a blockhead can talk without metaphor In effect, the ſame ſentiment may admit of an hundred different degrees of energy, and how are we to determine the preciſe degree in which to enforce it, but by the turn of expreſſion? I muſt confeſs I could not myſelf help ſmiling at the abſurdity of ſome phraſes I uſed I thank you for the trouble you took to pick them out But let them ſtand where they are, you will find them clear and peculiarly emphatical. Let us ſuppoſe that your two ſprightly ſparkling eyes, whoſe language is now ſo expreſſive, were ſeparated one from the other, and from the ſet of features to which they give ſuch luſtre, what think you, couſin, they would ſay, even with all their vivacity and fire? Believe me, they would loſe all power of expreſſion, they would be mute even to Mr Orbe.

Is not the firſt thing that preſents itſelf to obſervation in a ſtrange country, the general caſt and turn of converſation? and is not this the firſt obſervation I made in Paris? I have written to you only what is ſaid, and not what is done in this city. If I remarked a contraſt between the diſcourſe, the ſentiments, and the actions of the people, it is becauſe the contraſt is too ſtriking to eſcape the moſt ſuperficial obſerver. When I ſee the ſame perſons change their maxims according to the company they frequent,

Moliniſts in one, and Janſeniſts in another, court ſycophants with the miniſter, and factious grumblers with an anti-courtier when I ſee a man in lace and embroidery rail at luxury, an officer of the revenue againſt impoſts, or a prelate againſt gluttony, when I hear a court-lady talk of modeſty, a noble lord of honeſty, an author of candour, or an abbe of religion, and ſee nobody ſurpriſed at theſe abſurdities, is it not natural enough to conclude, that people here are as little anxious to hear truth as to ſpeak it? and that, ſo far from endeavouring to perſuade others into their own opinion, they care not whether they are believed or not?

But let this ſuffice in the way of pleaſantry, for an anſwer to our couſin I will lay aſide an affectation to which we are all three ſtrangers, and I hope you will find in me for the future as little of the fauteſt a the wit. And now, Julia, let me reply to you; for I am at no loſs to diſtinguiſh between critical raillery and ſerious reproaches.

I cannot conceive how both you and your couſin could ſo egregiouſly miſtake the object of my deſcription. It was not the French in particular on whom I intended to animadvert. For if the characters of nations can be determined only by their difference, how can I, who have as yet no acquaintance with any other, pretend to draw the character of this? I ſhould not beſides have been ſo indiſcreet as to fix on the metropolis for the place of obſervation I am not ignorant that capital cities differ leſs from each other than the national characters of the people which are there in a great meaſure loſt and confound-

founded, as well from the influence of courts, all which bear a great reſemblance to each other, as from the common conſequence of living in a cloſe and numerous ſociety, which is alſo every-where nearly the ſame, and prevails over the original and peculiar character of the country.

Were I to ſtudy the natural characteriſtics of a people, I would repair to ſome of the more diſtant provinces, where the inhabitants ſtill purſue their natural inclinations I would proceed ſlowly and carefully through ſeveral of thoſe provinces, and thoſe at greateſt diſtance from each other from the difference I might obſerve between them, I would then trace the peculiar genius of each province, from what was theirs in common and not cuſtomary to other countries, I would trace the genius of the nation in general, and what appeared common to all nations, I ſhould regard as characteriſtics of mankind in general But I have neither formed ſo extenſive a project, nor, if I had, am I poſſeſſed of the neceſſary experience to put it in execution My deſign is to improve myſelf in the knowledge of mankind univerſally, and my method is to conſider man in his ſeveral relations. I have hitherto been acquainted only with ſmall ſocieties ſcattered up and down, in a manner alone, and without connections. At preſent I am in the midſt of others, which are ſurrounded by multitudes on the ſame ſpot, from which I ſhall begin to judge of the genuine effects of ſociety, for if men are conſtantly made better by their aſſociation, they ought to be ſtill the better, the more numerous and cloſely connected

they are, and their manners ſhould be more ſimple and leſs corrupted at Paris than in the Valais, but if experience prove the contrary, we muſt draw the oppoſite concluſion.

This method, I confeſs, may in time lead to the knowledge of the national characters of people; but by a round ſo tedious and indirect, that I may perhaps never be qualified to determine that of any one nation upon earth I muſt begin to make my obſervations on the firſt country in which I reſide; proceeding, in the others I paſs through, to mark the difference between them and the firſt comparing France to every other, as we deſcribe an olive-tree by a willow, or a palm-tree by a fir, and muſt defer the forming my judgment of the firſt people obſerved, till I have finiſhed my obſervations on all the reſt

Pleaſe to diſtinguiſh then, my charming monitor, between philoſophical obſervation and national ſatire. It is not the Pariſians that I ſtudy, but the inhabitants of a great city; and I know not whether the remarks I have made be not as applicable to thoſe of Rome and London, as of Paris Moral principles do not depend on the cuſtoms of a people, ſo that in ſpite of their reigning prejudices I can perceive what is wrong in itſelf. but I know not whether I can juſtly attribute it to the Frenchman, or the *man*, whether it be the effect of habit, or of nature Vice is in every place offenſive to an impartial eye. and it is no more blameable to reprove it in whatever country it is found, becauſe we reſide there, than to correct the failings of humanity, becauſe we live among men. Am not I

at preſent an inhabitant of Paris? perhaps I may have already inconſciouſly contributed my ſhare to the diſorders I have remarked perhaps too long a ſtay may corrupt even my inclinations, and at the end of a year I may be no more than a Pariſian myſelf, if, in order to be deſerving of Julia, I do not cheriſh the ſpirit of liberty and the manners of a free-citizen. Let me proceed therefore, without reſtraint, in deſcribing objects I ſhould bluſh to reſemble, and in animating my zeal for virtue by diſplaying the diſguſtful pictures of falſehood and vice.

Were my employment and fortune in my own power, I might without doubt make choice of other ſubjects for my letters You were not diſpleaſed with thoſe I wrote you from Meillerie and the Valais but, my dear friend, it is neceſſary for me, in order to ſupport the noiſe and hurry of the world in which I am obliged to live, to conſole myſelf in writing to you, and the thoughts of drawing up my narratives for your peruſal, ſhould excite me to look out for proper ſubjects. Diſcouragement would otherwiſe overtake me at every ſtep, and I muſt entirely relinquiſh my obſervations on mankind, if you refuſe to hear me Conſider that, to live in a manner ſo little conformable to my taſte, I make an effort not unworthy of its cauſe: and to enable you to judge of what I muſt undergo to obtain you, permit me to ſpeak ſometimes of the maxims I am forced to learn, and the obſtacles I am obliged to encounter

In ſpite of my ſlow pace, and unavoidable avocations, my collection was finiſhed when your letter

letter happily arrived to prolong my taſk of copying · but I admire, in ſeeing it ſo ſhort, how you contrive to ſay ſo much in ſo few words I will maintain it, there can be no reading ſo delightful as that of your letters, even to thoſe to whom you are a ſtranger, if their hearts do but reſemble ours. But how can you be a ſtranger to any one who reads your letters? is it poſſible that a manner ſo engaging, that ſentiments ſo tender can belong to any other than Julia? Are not your enchanting looks ſeen in every ſentence? is not your charming voice heard every word It is impoſſible for any other to love, to think, to ſpeak, to act, to write like Julia Be not ſurpriſed then if your letters, which ſo ſtrikingly convey your form and feature, ſhould ſometimes have the ſame effect as your preſence on a lover, who ſo devoutly idoliſes your perſon I loſe my ſenſes in their peruſal, my head grows giddy, a devouring flame conſumes me, my blood boils, and I become frantic with paſſion I fancy I ſee, I feel, I preſs you to my heart—adorable object! bewitching beauty! ſource of rapture and delight! image of thoſe angelic forms which are the fabled companions of the bleſſed! come to my arms——ſhe is here——I claſp her in my embrace——ah! no, ſhe is vaniſhed, and I graſp but at a ſhadow. Indeed, my dear friend, you are too charming, you have been too indulgent to the weakneſs of a heart, that can never forget your charms, nor your tenderneſs. Your beauty even triumphs in its abſence, it purſues me wherever I go, it makes me dread to be alone, and it is my greateſt misery that I dare not

not give myſelf to the contemplation of ſo raviſhing an object.

Our friends then, I find, will be united in ſpite of all obſtacles, or rather they are ſo while I am now writing. Amiable and deſerving pair! may heaven beſtow on them all the bleſſings their prudent and peaceful affections, innocence of manners, and goodneſs of heart, deſerve! may it bleſs them with that happineſs it is ſo ſparing of to thoſe who were formed by nature to taſte its delights! Happy indeed will they be, if heaven ſhould grant to them what it has taken from us! And yet, Julia, we may draw ſome conſolation even from our misfortunes. Do you not perceive that our ſevereſt troubles are not without their peculiar ſatisfactions, and that although our friends may taſte pleaſures of which we are deprived, we enjoy others of which they are ignorant? Yes, my gentle friend, in ſpite of abſence, loſſes, fears, in ſpite even of deſpair itſelf, the powerful exertion of two hearts, longing for each other, is always attended with a ſecret pleaſure unknown to thoſe at eaſe. This is one of the miracles of love that teacheth us how to extract pleaſure from pain, and would make us look upon a ſtate of indifference as the greateſt of all misfortunes. Though we lament our own ſituation, then let us not envy that of others. On the whole, perhaps, there is none preferable to our own: as the Deity derives his happineſs from himſelf, the hearts that glow with a celeſtial paſſion find in themſelves the ſource of refined enjoyment, independent of fortune and all the univerſe beſides.

LET-

LETTER LXXXII.

To JULIA.

AT length, Julia, behold me ſwim with the ſtream My collection being finiſhed, I begin to frequent the public diverſions, and to ſup in company, I ſpend the whole day abroad, and am attentive to every ſtriking object: but, perceiving nothing that reſembles you, I recollect myſelf in the midſt of noiſe and confuſion, and converſe in ſecret with my love It is not however, that this buſy and tumultuous life has not in it ſomething agreeable, or that ſuch a vaſt variety of objects do not preſent a conſiderable fund of gratification to the curioſity of a ſtranger but, to enjoy them, the heart ſhould be vacant, and the underſtanding idle. Both love and reaſon ſeem to unite in raiſing my diſguſt againſt ſuch amuſement Every thing here being confined to appearances, which are every inſtant changing, I have time neither to be affected with nor to examine any thing.

Hence I begin to ſee the difficulties of ſtudying the world, and indeed I know not what ſituation is moſt likely to make me a proficient in this ſcience. The ſpeculatiſt lives at too great a diſtance, and the man of buſineſs too near the object, to view it critically the one ſees too much to be able to reflect on any part, and the other too little to judge of the whole piece Every object that ſtrikes the philoſopher he examines apart, and, not being able to diſcern its connections and relations with others that lie beyond

yond the field of his obſervation, he never ſees them placed in their proper point of view, and knows neither their real cauſes nor effects. The man of buſineſs ſees all, and has leiſure to think on nothing. The inſtability of objects permits him barely to perceive their exiſtence, and not to examine their qualities they paſs in ſucceſſion before him with ſuch rapidity, that they efface the impreſſion of each other, and load his memory only with a chaos of confuſed ideas It is alſo as impoſſible to make obſervations, and meditate on them alternately, as the ſcene requires a conſtant and unremitted attention, which reflection would interrupt A man who would divide his time by intervals between ſolitude and ſociety, always perplexed in retirement, and to ſeek in the world, would be able to do nothing in either. There is but one way and that is, to divide the whole period of life into two parts; applying the one to obſervation, and the other to reflection. But even this is next to impoſſible; for reaſon is not a piece of furniture that can be thrown aſide and put to uſe again at pleaſure: the man who ſhould live ten years without reflection, will never again be capable of it as long as he lives

I find likewiſe it is a folly to think to ſtudy mankind in the quality of a ſimple ſpectator. He who pretends only to make obſervations, will be able to obſerve nothing for, being uſeleſs to the men of buſineſs, and troubleſome to thoſe of pleaſure, he will find no where admittance We can have the opportunity of ſeeing others act, in proportion only as we act with them, in the ſchool of the world, as well as in that of love,

love, we muſt begin by practiſing whatever we deſire to learn.

What method then can I take? I that am a ſtranger, and can follow no employment in this country, and whom even the difference of religion excludes from aſpiring to office? I am reduced to be humble, in order to inſtruct myſelf; and, as I can never be uſeful, muſt endeavour to make myſelf agreeable. To this end, I aim as much as poſſible to be polite without flattery, complaiſant without meanneſs, and to put ſo good a face on what is tolerable in ſociety that I may be admitted into it, without being under the neceſſity of adopting its vices. Every man that would ſee the world, and has nothing to do in it, ought at leaſt to adopt its manners to a certain degree. For what pretenſions can he have to be admitted into the ſociety of people to whom he can be of no ſervice, and to whom he has not the addreſs to make himſelf agreeable? But, if he has found out this art, it is all that is required of him, particularly if he be a ſtranger. Such a one has no occaſion to take part in their cabals, their intrigues, or their quarrels: if he behaves obligingly to every one, if he neither excludes nor prefers women of a certain character, if he keeps the ſecrets of the company into which he is admitted, if he turns not into ridicule at one houſe, what he ſees in another, if he avoids making confidents, entering into broils, and, in particular, if he maintains a certain perſonal dignity, he may ſee the world without moleſtation, preſerve the purity of his manners, his probity, and even his frankneſs itſelf, if it ariſes from a ſpirit of liberty,

ty, and not from that of party This is what I have endeavoured to do, agreeable to the advice of ſome people of ſenſe, whom I have choſen for my adviſers, among the acquaintance Lord B——'s intereſt has procured me. In conſequence of this, I begin now to be admitted into companies leſs numerous and more ſelect. Hitherto I have been chiefly invited to regular dinners, where the only woman at table is the miſtreſs of the family; where open houſe is kept for all the idle people about Paris, with whom they have the ſlighteſt acquaintance, and where every one pays for his dinner in wit, or flattery, as he can beſt afford, the converſation being in general noiſy and confuſed, and very much reſembling that of a public ordinary.

I am at preſent initiated into the more ſecret myſteries of viſiting. being invited to private ſuppers, where the door is ſhut againſt all ſtrolling and chance gueſts, and every one is upon an agreeable footing, if not with each other, at leaſt with the provider of the entertainment. Here it is that the women are leſs reſerved, and their real characters more eaſily diſcovered The converſation is in theſe parties carried on with more decorum, and is more refined and ſatirical inſtead of talking of the public news, plays, promotions, births, deaths, and marriages, which were the topics of the morning, they here take a review of the ſeveral anecdotes of Paris, divulge the ſecret articles of the ſcandalous chronicle, turn the good and bad alike into ridicule, and, in artfully deſcribing the characters of others, undeſignedly diſplay their

own. It is in these companies that the little circumspection which remains has invented a peculiar kind of language, under which they affect to render their satire more obscure, while it only makes it more severe. It is here, in a word, that they carefully sharpen the poinard, under pretence of making it less hurtful, but, in fact, only to make it wound the deeper.

To judge, however, of this conversation according to our notions of things, we should be in the wrong to call it satirical; for it consists more of raillery than censure, and turns less upon the vicious than the ridiculous ——Satire in general is not common in large cities, where that which is downright wicked is too simple to be worth talking about. What can they condemn where virtue is in no esteem? and what should they revile where nothing is held to be villainous? At Paris, more particularly, where every thing is seen in an agreeable light, the representation of things that ought to raise our indignation is well received, if it be but wrapt up in a song or an epigram. The fine ladies of this country do not like to be displeased, and are therefore displeased at nothing they love to laugh, but wo be to him who happens to be the subject of their ridicule; the scars this caustic imprints are never to be effaced, they not only defame good manners and virtue, but exaggerate even vice itself But to return to our company

What strikes me most in these select meetings, is to see that half a dozen people, expressly chosen to entertain one another agreeably, and between whom there generally subsist very intı-

intimate connections, cannot converſe an hour together without introducing the affairs of half the people in Paris, juſt as if their hearts had nothing to ſay to each other, or that there was no perſon in company of merit enough to engage their attention. You know, Julia, how far otherwiſe it was with us, when we ſupped together at your couſin's, or your own apartment, how we could find means, in ſpite of conſtraint and ſecreſy, to turn the diſcourſe on ſubjects that related to ourſelves, how at every moving reflection, at every ſubtile alluſion, a look more ſwift than lightning, a ſigh rather imagined than perceived, conveyed the pleaſing ſenſation from one heart to the other

If the diſcourſe here turn by accident on any of the company, it is commonly carried on in a jargon known only to the perſons concerned, and which others need a vocabulary to underſtand. Thus by talking as it were in cypher, they are enabled to banter each other with inſipid raillery, in which the greateſt blockhead does not always ſhine the leaſt. In the mean time, perhaps a third part of the company, incapable of taking the jeſt, are either reduced to a diſagreeable ſilence, or to laugh at what they do not comprehend Of this kind, Julia, is all the tenderneſs and affection I have obſerved in the intimacies of this country thoſe of a more private nature, with only a ſecond perſon, I have not, nor ever ſhall have experienced.

In the midſt of all this, however, if a man of any weight and conſequence ſhould enter on a grave diſcourſe, or begin to diſcuſs a ſerious queſtion, a general attention would be imme-

diately fixed on this new object men and women, old and young, every one would be ready to enter into its examination, and it is astonishing how much good sense and precision would, as it were, through emulation, sally out of their extravagant heads *. A point of morality could not be better determined in a society of philosophers, than in that of a fine lady at Paris. their conclusions would even be less precise and severe for the philosopher, who thinks himself obliged to act as he speaks, will be less rigid in his principles, but, where morality is nothing more than a topic of discourse, the severity of it is of no consequence, and no one is displeased at an opportunity of checking philosophical pride, by placing virtue out of his reach.

Besides this, influenced by a knowledge of the world and of their own hearts, all agree in thinking human nature as depraved as possible; hence their philosophy is always of the gloomy cast, they are ever indulging their own vanity by depreciating the virtues of humanity; always accounting for good actions from vicious motives, and attributing to mankind in general the depravity of their own minds.

And yet, notwithstanding their adopting this abject

* Provided always that no unforeseen object of pleasantry start up to disturb their gravity, for in that case, it is laid hold of by every one in a moment, and it is impossible to recall their serious attention I remember that a handful of gingerbread cakes once ludicrously put an end to a dramatic representation at the fair The actors were indeed quadrupeds, but how many trifling things are there that would prove gingerbread cakes to some sort of men! it is well known whom Fontenelle intended to describe in his history of the Tyrants

abject doctrine, one of the favourite topics of theſe ſocieties is *ſentiment*, a word by which we are not to underſtand the ſenſation of a heart ſuſceptible of love or friendſhip this would be thought vulgar and diſguſting. No; ſentiment conſiſts in great and general maxims, heightened by the moſt ſublime ſubtilties of metaphyſics. I can ſafely ſay, that I have never in my life heard ſo much talk of ſentiment, nor ever comprehended ſo little what was meant by it; ſo inconceivable are theſe French refinements! Our ſimple hearts, my Julia, never were governed by any of theſe fine maxims, and I am afraid it is with ſentiment in the polite world, as it is with Homer among the pedants, who diſcover in him a thouſand imaginary beauties, for want of taſte to diſcern his real ones. So much ſentiment is here laid out in wit, and evaporated in converſation, that none is left to influence their actions. Happily, politeneſs ſupplies its place, and people act from cuſtom nearly as they would from ſenſibility at leaſt ſo long as it coſts them only a few compliments, and ſuch trifling reſtraints as they willingly lay themſelves under in order to be reſpected, but if any conſiderable ſacrifice of their eaſe or intereſt is required, adieu to ſentiment, politeneſs does not proceed ſo far, ſo far as it goes, however, you can hardly believe how nicely every article of behaviour is weighed, meaſured, and eſtimated. What is not regulated by ſentiment, is ſubjected to cuſtom, by which indeed every thing here is governed. Theſe people are all profeſſed copyiſts, and, though they abound in originals, nobody knows any thing of them, or preſumes to be ſo

himſelf. *To do like other people*, is a maxim of the greateſt weight in this country and *this is the mode—that is not the mode*, are deciſions from which there is no appeal.

This apparent regularity gives to the common, and even the moſt ſerious tranſactions of life, the moſt comical air in the world. They have ſettled even the very moment when it is proper to ſend cards to their acquaintance; when to viſit with a card, that is, to viſit without viſiting at all; when to do it in perſon; when it is proper to be at home, when to be denied; what advances it is proper to make, or reject, on every occaſion, what degree of ſorrow ſhould be affected at the death of ſuch or ſuch a one*, how long to mourn in the country, when they may come to conſole themſelves in town; the very day, and even the minute, when the afflicted is permitted to give a ball, or go to the play. Every body in the ſame circumſtances does the ſame thing: they keep time, and their motions are made all together, like the evolutions of a regiment in battalia; ſo that you would think them ſo many puppets, nailed to the ſame board, or moved by the ſame wire.

Now, as it is morally impoſſible that all theſe people, though they act in the ſame manner, ſhould

* To be afflicted at the deceaſe of any perſon, betrays a ſenſe of humanity and is a ſign of a good diſpoſition, but is no inſtance of virtue, there being no moral obligation to lament even the death of a father. Whoever in ſuch a caſe, therefore, is not really afflicted, ought not to affect the appearance of it, for it is more neceſſary always to avoid deceit, than to comply with cuſtom.

ſhould be at once equally affected, it is plain, their peculiar characters are not to be known by their actions, it is plain their diſcourſe is only a formal jargon, which aſſiſts us leſs to form a judgment of the French manners in general, than the peculiar mode of converſing in Paris. In like manner, we learn only here their terms of converſation, but nothing by which we can eſtimate their moral character I ſay the ſame of moſt of their writings, and even of their theatrical repreſentations, the ſtage, ſince the time of Muliere, being a place where they rather repeat agreeable dialogues, than give a repreſentation of life and manners. There are here three theatres; on two of which they only introduce imaginary characters, ſuch as Harlequin, Pantaloon, and Scaramouch, on the one, and, on the other, gods, devils, and conjurers On the third, they repreſent thoſe immortal dramas which give us ſo much pleaſure in reading, and other new pieces which are from time to time written for the ſtage, many of which are tragical, but not affecting, and, though the ſentiments contained in them are ſometimes natural, and well enough adapted to the human heart, they give us not the leaſt light into the peculiar manners of the people to whom they afford entertainment.

The inſtitution of tragedy was originally founded on religion, whoſe ſanction was ſufficient to eſtabliſh its authority Beſides this, the tragic ſcene always preſented to the Greeks an inſtructive and agreeable repreſentation, either in the misfortunes of the Perſians their enemies, or in the vices and follies of the kings from which they

they themſelves were delivered. Should they repreſent in like manner at Berne, at Zurich, or at the Hague, the ancient tyranny of the houſe of Auſtria, the love of liberty and their country would made ſuch a repreſentation peculiarly intereſting to the ſpectators but I would be glad to know of what uſe are the tragedies of Corneille at Paris, and what intereſt its citizens can take in the fate of a Pompey or Sertorius. The Greek tragedies turned upon real events, or ſuch as were ſuppoſed to be real, being founded on hiſtorical tradition. But what buſineſs has a refined heroic paſſion in the breaſts of the great? The conflicts of love and virtue cauſe them, no doubt, many unhappy day and ſleepleſs night! the heart is doubtleſs vaſtly concerned in the marriages of kings! Judge then of the probability and uſe of ſo many performances all turning on ſuch imaginary ſubjects.

As to comedy, it ſhould certainly be a lively repreſentation of the manners of the people for whom it is written; that it may ſerve them as a mirror to ſhew them their vices and follies. Terence and Plautus miſtook their ſubjects, but their predeceſſors, Ariſtophanes and Menander, diſplayed Athenian manners before an Athenian audience; and ſince theſe, Moliere, and Moliere only, has repreſented ſtill more ingenuouſly in France the manners of the French in the laſt age.

The objects of the pictures are ſince changed, but they have never ſince had ſo faithful, ſo maſterly a painter. At preſent, they only copy on the theatre the manner of converſing in about ten hundred families in Paris, and this is their repre-

repreſentation of French manners ſo that there are in this great city five or ſix hundred thouſand perſons, whoſe various characters are never introduced on the ſtage Moliere deſcribed the ſhopkeeper and artizan, as well as the marquis Socrates introduces the diſcourſes of coachmen, carpenters, ſhoemakers, and maſons But our preſent writers, quite of another ſtamp, think it beneath them to know what paſſes in a trader's compting-houſe or the ſhop of a mechanic their dramas muſt conſiſt of perſons of the firſt quality, for by the grandeur of their characters, they aim at a degree of eminence they never could attain by the force of genius. Nay, the audience itſelf is become ſo very delicate, that the chief of the ſpectators are as jealous of place and precedence in going to a play as in making a viſit, never condescending to be preſent at the repreſentation of characters of inferior condition.

Indeed, the people of faſhion here are conſidered by themſelves as the only inhabitants of the earth, all the reſt of mankind are nothing. All the world keep a coach, a Swiſs, and a *maitre d hotel* all the world, therefore, conſiſts of a very ſmall number of people Thoſe who walk a-foot are nobody, they are your common people, human creatures, the vulgar, folks in ſhort of another world ſo that a coach is not ſo neceſſary to carry one about, as to give one a title to exiſtence And hence there is a handful of impertinent people, who look upon themſelves as the only beings of any conſequence in the univerſe; though, were it not for the miſchief they occaſion, they themſelves would not deſerve to be numbered with the reſt of

man-

mankind It is nevertheleſs ſolely for theſe people that theatrical entertainments are made. They are repreſented by fictitious characters in the middle of the theatre, and ſhew themſelves in real ones on each ſide, they are at once perſons of the drama on the ſtage, and comedians in the boxes. It is thus the ſphere of the world and genius is contracted, while the preſent dramatic writers abſurdly affect to introduce only characters of imaginary importance. No man is worthy of being brought upon the ſtage that does not wear a laced coat. A ſtranger would hence be apt to think France peopled only by counts and marquiſes, although in fact, the more miſerable and beggarly its inhabitants grow, the more ſplendid and brilliant is their repreſentation on the theatre and hence it is, that the ridiculous behaviour of perſons of rank, in being expoſed on the ſtage, rather gains ground than diminiſhes, and that the common people, who are ever aping the rich, go leſs to the theatre to laugh at their follies than to ſtudy them, and to become by imitation greater fools than the originals.

The French are indebted even to Moliere in a great meaſure for this evil: he corrected the courtiers by ſpoiling the citizens, and his ridiculous marquiſes were the firſt model of thoſe ſtill more contemptible petit-maitres which ſucceeded them in the city

There is in general much diſcourſe and but very little action on the French ſtage the reaſon of which is, perhaps, that the French *talk* much more than they *do*, or at leaſt that they pay a much greater regard to what is ſaid than

to

to what is done. I remember the anſwer of a ſpectator, who, in coming out from the repreſentation of one of the pieces of Dionyſius the tyrant, was aſked what he had ſeen? *I have ſeen nothing*, ſaid he, *but I have heard a deal of talk* The ſame might be ſaid of the French plays Racine and Corneille, with all their genius, are no more than talkers, and their ſucceſſor is the firſt of all the French poets, who, in imitation of the Engliſh, has ſometimes ventured to bring ſcenes of action on the ſtage In common, their plays conſiſt only of witty or florid dialogues well diſpoſed, where it is obvious the chief deſign of the ſpeakers is to diſplay their talents of wit and elocution In the mean time, almoſt every ſentiment is delivered in the ſtyle of a general maxim However tranſported they may be with paſſion, they always preſerve their reſpect to the public, of whom they think more conſtantly than of themſelves the pieces of Racine and Moliere excepted *, egotiſm is excluded as ſcrupulouſly from the French drama, as from the writings of Meſſieurs de Port-Royal, and the paſſions of the human heart never ſpeak, but with all the modeſty of Chriſtian humility in the third perſon. There is beſides a certain affected dignity in theatrical diſcourſe and action, which never permits the paſſions to be expreſſed in their natural language, or

* Moliere ought not to be ranked here with Racine the firſt indeed abounds with maxims and ſentimental obſervations, like all the others, eſpecially in his ſerious pieces; but in Racine all is ſentimental, he makes every character ſpeak for the author, and is in this point truly ſingular among all the dramatic writers of his nation

or ſuffers the writer to diveſt himſelf of the poet and attend to the ſcene of action, but binds him conſtantly down to the theatre and the audience. Hence the moſt critical ſituations, the moſt intereſting circumſtances of the piece, never make him forget the niceſt arrangement of phraſe or elegancies of attitude. Should even deſpair plunge a dagger in the heart of his hero, nor contented that, like Polixenes, he ſhould obſerve a decency in falling, he would not even let him fall for the ſake of decency, he is ſupported bolt upright after he is dead, and continues as erect after he expired as before.

The reaſon of all this is, that a Frenchman requires on the ſtage neither nature nor deception, but only wit and ſentiment. he requires only to be diverted, and cares not whether what he ſees be a true or falſe repreſentation of nature Nobody here goes to the theatre for the pleaſure of ſeeing the play, but for the ſake of ſeeing and being ſeen by the company, and to catch a ſubject for converſation after the play is over The actor with them is always the actor, never the character he repreſents. He who gives himſelf thoſe important airs of an univerſal ſovereign is not the emperor Auguſtus, it is only Baron The relict of Pompey is no other than Adrienne, Alzire is mademoiſelle Gauſſin, and that formidable ſavage is no other than the civil Grandval The comedians, on the other hand, give themſelves no trouble to keep up an illuſion which nobody expects. They place the venerable heroes of antiquity between ſix rows of young ſpruce Pariſians they have their Roman dreſſes made up in the French faſhion the weep-

weeping Cornelia is ſeen bathed in tears, with her rouge laid on two fingers thick, Cato has his hair dreſſed and powdered, and Brutus ſtruts along in a Roman hoop-petticoat yet nobody is ſhocked at all this abſurdity, nor doth it hinder the ſucceſs of the piece, for, as the actors only are ſeen in the characters, ſo what reſpects the author is the only thing conſidered in the play, and, though propriety ſhould be entirely neglected, it is eaſily excuſed, for every one knows that Corneille was no taylor, nor Crebillon a peruke-maker

Thus, in whatever light we view this people, all is verboſity and jargon, talk without deſign, and words without meaning. In the theatre, as in the world, be as attentive as you will to what is ſaid, you will learn nothing of what is done, when a man has ſpoken, it would be thought impertinent to inquire after his conduct he has ſpoken, that is ſufficient, and he muſt ſtand or fall by what he has ſaid The reſpectable man here is not he that does good actions, but he that ſays good things, and a ſingle ſentence ſometimes inadvertently uttered ſhall caſt an odium on a man's character, which forty years of integrity will not be able to erase In a word, although the conduct of men does not always reſemble their diſcourſe, yet I ſee they are characteriſed by their diſcourſe without any regard to their actions I have remarked alſo, that in a great city, ſociety appears more free, agreeable, and even more ſafe, than among people leſs knowing and leſs civiliſed, but I will not pretend to ſay the latter are therefore leſs humane, temperate, or juſt. On the contrary, among

the former, where every thing is governed by appearances, the heart is perhaps more hid by external ſhew, and lies deeper concealed under agreeable deceptions. It does not however belong to me, who am a ſtranger, without buſineſs, pleaſures, or connections, to decide here.

I begin, nevertheleſs, to perceive in myſelf that intoxication into which ſuch a buſy tumultuous life plunges every one who leads it, and am affected with a dizzineſs, like that of a man before whoſe eyes a multitude of ſucceſſive objects paſs with rapidity. Not one of theſe, which thus ſtrike me, affects my heart, but all together they ſo diſturb and ſuſpend its affections, that I ſometimes forget not only myſelf, but even my Julia. Every day, on leaving my apartment, I leave my *obſervations* locked up behind me, and proceed to make others on the frivolous objects which preſent themſelves. Inſenſibly I begin to think and reaſon in the manner of other people, and, if ever I ſtrive to get the better of their prejudices, and look upon things as they are, I am immediately borne down by a torrent of words, which carry with them a ſhew of reaſon. The people here will prove to a demonſtration, that none but ſuperficial half-witted reaſoners regard the reality of things; that the true philoſopher conſiders only their appearances; that prejudice and prepoſſeſſion ſhould paſs for principle, decorum for law, and that the moſt profound wiſdom conſiſts in living like fools.

Thus conſtrained to pervert the order of the moral affections, to ſet a value on chimeras, and put nature and reaſon to ſilence, I ſee with regret

gret how ſullied and defaced is that divine image which I cheriſh in my breaſt, once the ſole object of my deſires, and the only guide of my conduct · I am borne by one caprice to another, my inclinations are continually enſlaved by the general opinion, and I am never certain one day what I ſhall approve the next

Abaſhed and confounded to find my humanity ſo far debaſed, to ſee myſelf fallen ſo low from that innate greatneſs of mind to which our paſſion had reciprocally elevated us, I return home at night, with a heart ſwelling, yet vacant as a ball puffed up with air, ſickened with diſguſt, and ſunk in ſorrow. But with what joy do I recollect myſelf, when alone! with what tranſports do I feel the ſenſations of love again take poſſeſſion of my heart, and reſtore me to the dignity of a man! O love! how refined are thy ſenſations! how do I applaud myſelf when I ſee the image of virtue preſerve its luſtre ſtill in my breaſt! when I contemplate thine, my Julia! ſtill there, unſullied, ſitting on a throne of glory, and diſſipating in a moment my gloomy deluſions. I feel my depreſſed ſoul revive; I ſeem to recover my exiſtence, to live anew, and to regain, with my love, thoſe ſublime ſentiments that render the paſſion worthy of its object.

LETTER LXXXIII.

From JULIA.

I AM juſt returned, my dear friend, from the

enjoyment of one of the moſt delightful ſights I ſhall ever behold The moſt prudent, the moſt amiable girl in the world is at length become the moſt deſerving, the beſt of women. The worthy man, to whom ſhe has given her hand, lives only to revere, to cheriſh, to make her happy, and I feel that inexpreſſible pleaſure of being a witneſs to the happineſs of my friend, and of ſharing it with her. Nor will you, I am convinced, partake of it leſs than myſelf; you, for whom ſhe had always the tendereſt eſteem, who were dear to her almoſt from her infancy, and have received from her obligations which ſhould render her yet more dear to you. Yes, we will ſympathiſe with all her ſenſations, if to her they give pleaſure, to us they ſhall afford conſolation, for, ſo great is the value of that friendſhip which unites us, that the happineſs of any one of the three is ſufficient to moderate the afflictions of the other two.

Let us not, however, too highly felicitate ourſelves, our incomparable friend is going in ſome meaſure to forſake us She is now entered on a new ſcene of life, is bound by new engagements, and become ſubject to new obligations. Her heart, which once was only ours, will now find room for other affections, to which friendſhip muſt give place We ought therefore, my friend, to be more ſcrupulous hereafter in the ſervices we impoſe on her zeal; we ought not only to conſult the ſincerity of her attachment, and the need we have of her ſervice, but what may with propriety be required in her preſent ſituation, what may be agreeable or diſpleaſing to her huſband. We have no buſineſs to inquire

quire what virtue demands in ſuch a caſe, the laws of friendſhip are ſufficient He who for his own ſake could expoſe his friend, deſerves not to have one. When ours was unmarried, ſhe was at liberty, ſhe hady nobody to call her to account for her conduct, and the uprightneſs of her intentions was ſufficient to juſtify her to herſelf. She conſidered us as man and wife deſtined for each other, and her chaſte yet ſuſceptible heart uniting a due regard for herſelf to the moſt tender compaſſion for her culpable friend, ſhe concealed my fault without abetting it, but now circumſtances are changed, and ſhe is juſtly accountable to the man to whom ſhe has not only plighted her vows, but reſigned her liberty She is now entruſted not only with her own honour, but with that of her huſband, and it is not enough that ſhe is virtuous, her virtue muſt be reſpected, and her conduct approved. ſhe muſt not only *deſerve* the eſteem of her huſband, but ſhe muſt *obtain* it: if he blames her, ſhe is to blame, and though ſhe be innocent, ſhe is in the wrong the moment ſhe is ſuſpected, for to ſtudy appearances is an indiſpenſable part of her duty

I cannot determine preciſely how far I am right in my judgment, I leave that to you but there is a monitor within that tells me it is not right my couſin ſhould continue to be my confident, nor that ſhe ſhould be the firſt to tell me ſo I may be frequently miſtaken in my arguments, but I am convinced I am always right in the ſenſations on which they are founded; and this makes me confide more in thoſe ſenſations than on the deductions of my reaſon

From this conſideration I have already formed a pretence to get back your letters, which, for fear of a ſurpriſe, I had put into her hands. She returned them with an oppreſſion of heart which mine eaſily perceived, and which convinced me I had acted as I ought. We entered into an explanation, but our looks were ſufficiently expreſſive, ſhe embraced me, and burſt into tears the tender ſenſibility of friendſhip hath little occaſion for the aſſiſtance of language.

With reſpect to the future addreſs of your letters, I thought immediately of my little Anet, as the ſafeſt. But if this young woman be inferior in rank to my couſin, is that a reaſon we ſhould leſs regard her virtue? Have I not reaſon, on the contrary, to fear my example may be more dangerous to one of leſs elevated ſentiments; that what was only an effort of the ſublimeſt friendſhip in one, may be the firſt ſtep to corruption in the other, and that in abuſing her gratitude, I may make virtue itſelf ſubſervient to the promotion of vice? Is it not enough, alas! for me to be culpable, without ſeducing accomplices, and aggravating my own crime by involving others in my guilt? Of this, therefore, no more. I have hit on another expedient, leſs ſafe indeed, but leſs exceptionable, as it lays nobody open to cenſure, nor requires a confident. It is for you to write to me under a fictitious name, as for example, that of Mr Boſquet, and to ſend your letters under cover addreſſed to Regianino, whom I ſhall take care to inſtruct. Thus Regianino himſelf will know nothing of our correſpondence, or at moſt can only form ſuſpicions which he dares not confirm, for

Lord

Lord B——, on whoſe favour he depends, has anſwered for his fidelity. While our correſpondence is maintained by this means, I will try if it be poſſible to reſume the method we made uſe of in your voyage to the Valois, or ſome other that may be laſting and without hazard.

There is ſomething in the turn and ſtyle of your letters, that would convince me, were I even unaquainted with the ſtate of your heart, that the life you lead at Paris is in no wiſe agreeable to your inclinations. The letters of Muralt, of which they ſo loudly complain in France, are even leſs ſatyrical and ſevere than yours. Like a child that is angry with its tutors, you revenge the diſagreeable neceſſity you are under of ſtudying the world, upon your firſt teachers.

What ſurpriſes me moſt, however, is, that the very circumſtance, which uſually prejudiſes foreigners in favour of the French, ſhould give you diſguſt, I mean their polite reception of ſtrangers, and their general turn of converſation, though by your own confeſſion, you have met with great civility. I have not forgot your diſtinction between Paris in particular, and great cities in general, but I ſee plainly, that, without knowing preciſely what belongs to either, you cenſure without conſidering whether it be truth or ſlander. But however this be, the French are my favourites, and you do not at all oblige me in reviling them. It is to the many excellent writings France has produced, that I am indebted for moſt of thoſe leſſons by which we have together profited If Switzerland is emerged from its ancient barbarity, to whom is

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it obliged? the two greateſt and moſt virtuous men in modern ſtory, Catinat and Fenelon, were both Frenchmen. Henry the fourth, the good king, whoſe character I admire, was a Frenchman. If France be not the country of liberty, it is properly that of *men*, a ſuperior advantage in the eyes of a philoſopher to that of licentious freedom. Hoſpitable, protectors of the ſtranger, the French overlook real inſult, and a man would be pelted in London for ſaying half ſo much againſt the Engliſh, as the French will bear at Paris. My father, who hath ſpent the greateſt part of his life in France, never ſpeaks but with rapture of this agreeable people

If he has ſpilt his blood in the ſervice of its king, he has not been forgotten in his retirement, but is ſtill honoured by royal beneficence. Hence, I think myſelf in ſome degree intereſted in the glory of a nation, to which that of my father is indebted. If the people of all countries, my friend, have their good and ill qualities, you ought ſurely to pay the ſame regard to that impartiality which praiſes, as to that which blames them.

To be more particular with you, I will aſk you why you throw away in idle viſits the time you are to ſpend at Paris? Is not Paris a theatre wherein great talents may be diſplayed as well as London? and do ſtrangers find more difficulties in the way to reputation in the former, than they do in the latter? Believe me, all the Engliſh are not like Lord B——, nor do all the French reſemble thoſe fine talkers that give you ſo much diſguſt. Try, put them to the proof,

though

though it be only to acquire a more intimate acquaintance with their manners, and judge of people, that you own ſpeak ſo well, by their deeds My couſin's father ſays, you know the conſtitution of the empire, and the intereſts of princes. My Lord B——— acknowledges alſo, that you are well verſed in the principles of politics, and the various ſyſtems of government: and I have got it into my head, that of all countries in the world you will ſucceed beſt in that where merit is moſt eſteemed, and that you want only to be known, to be honourably employed. As to your religion's being an obſtacle, why ſhould yours be more ſo than another's? is not good ſenſe a ſecurity againſt fanaticiſm and perſecution? Is bigotry more prevalent in France than in Germany? and is there any thing that ſhould hinder your ſucceeding at Paris, as Mr St Saphorin has done at Vienna? If you conſider the end, the more ſpeedy your attempts, the ſooner may you promiſe yourſelf ſucceſs If you balance the means, it is certainly more reputable for a man to advance himſelf by his own abilities, than to be obliged for preferment to his friends. But, if you purpoſe a longer voyage ——ah! that *ſea*!—I ſhould like England better if it lay on this ſide Paris.——

But now I talk of Paris, may I venture to take notice of another piece of affectation I have remarked in your letters? How comes it that you, who ſpoke to me ſo freely of the women of this country, ſay nothing about the Pariſian ladies? Can thoſe celebrated and polite females be leſs worth your deſcription, than the ſimple and unpoliſhed inhabitants of the mountains? or are you

you apprehenſive of giving me uneaſineſs by a picture of the moſt charming and ſeductive creatures in the univerſe? If this be the caſe, my friend, undeceive yourſelf, and reſt aſſured, that the worſt thing you can do for my repoſe is to ſay nothing about them, and that however you might praiſe them, your ſilence in that reſpect is more ſuſpicious than would be your higheſt encomiums.

I ſhall be glad alſo to have ſome little account of the opera at Paris, of which they relate ſuch wonders; for after all, the muſic may be bad, and yet the repreſentation have its beauties; but if not, it will at leaſt afford a ſubject for your criticiſm, which will offend nobody.

I know not whether it be worth while to tell you, that my couſin's wedding produced me two ſuitors: they met here a few days ago, one of them from Yverdun, hunting all the way from caſtle to caſtle, and the other from Germany, in the ſtage coach from Berne. The firſt is a kind of ſmart, that ſpeaks loud and peremptory enough to make his repartees paſs for wit among thoſe who attend only to his manner. The other is a great baſhful ſimpleton, whoſe timidity, however, is not of that amiable kind which ariſes from the fear of diſpleaſing, but is owing to the embarraſſment of a blockhead who knows not what to ſay, and the aukwardneſs of a libertine who is at a loſs how to behave himſelf in the company of modeſt women. As I well know the intentions of my father in regard to theſe two gentlemen, I took, with pleaſure, the freedom he gave me, of treating them agreeable to my own humour, which, I believe, is ſuch

as

as will ſoon get the better of that which brought them hither. I hate them for their preſumption, in pretending to a heart which is yours, without the leaſt merit to diſpute it with you; yet if they had ever ſo much, I ſhould hate them the more, but where could they acquire it? they or any other man in the univerſe? no, my dear friend, reſt ſatisfied, it is impoſſible. Nay, were it poſſible that another ſhould be poſſeſſed of equal merit, or even that another *you* ſhould attack my heart, I ſhould never liſten to any but the firſt. Be not uneaſy, therefore, at theſe two animals, which I have with regret condeſcended to mention. What pleaſure ſhould I have in being able to give them both ſuch equal portions of diſguſt, as that they ſhould reſolve to depart both together as they came!

M. de Crouſaz has lately given us a refutation of the ethic epiſtles of Mr Pope, which I have read, but it did not pleaſe me. I will not take upon me to ſay which of theſe two authors is in the right, but I am perſuaded that the book of the former will never excite the reader to do any one virtuous action, while our zeal for every thing great and good is awakened by that of Pope For my own part, I have no other rule by which to judge of what I read, than that of conſulting the diſpoſitions in which I riſe up from my book, nor can I well conceive what ſort of merit any piece has to boaſt, the reading of which leaves no benevolent impreſſion behind it, nor ſtimulates the reader to any thing that is virtuous and good *.

Adieu,

* If the reader approves of this criterion, and makes uſe

of

Adieu, my dear friend, I would not finiſh my letter ſo ſoon, but am called away. I leave you with regret, for I am at preſent in a chearful diſpoſition, and I love you ſhould partake of my happineſs The cauſe which now inſpires it is, that my dear mother is much better within theſe few days, ſhe has indeed found herſelf ſo well as to be preſent at the wedding, and to give away her niece, or rather her other daughter. Poor Clara wept for joy to ſee her, and I———but you may judge of my ſenſations, who, deſerving her ſo little, hourly tremble at the thoughts of loſing her. In fact, ſhe did the honours of the table, and acquitted herſelf on the occaſion with as good a grace as if ſhe had been in perfect health Nay, it ſeemed to me that ſome remains of languor in her diſpoſition rendered her elegant complacences ſtill more affecting. Never did this incomparable parent appear ſo good, ſo charming, ſo worthy to be revered!—Do you know that ſhe aſked Mr Orbe concerning you ſeveral times? Although ſhe never ſpeaks of you to me, I am not ignorant of her eſteem for you, and that if ever ſhe were conſulted, your happineſs and mine would be her firſt concern. Ah! my friend, if your heart can be truly grateful, you owe her many, many obligations!

of it to judge of this work, I will not appeal from his judgment, whatever it prove

LET-

LETTER LXXXIV

To JULIA.

WELL, my Julia, ſcold me, quarrel with me, beat me, I will endure every thing, but will not ceaſe to acquaint you with my thoughts. Who ſhould be the depoſitary of my ſentiments but you who have enlightened them? and with whom ſhould my heart converſe, if you refuſe to hear me? When I give you an account of the obſervations I have made, and of my own opinions, it is not ſo much for your approbation, as correction; and the more liable I am to fall into error, the more punctual I ſhould be in my application to your judgment. If I cenſure the manners of the people in this great city, I do not ſeek to be juſtified for taking this liberty, becauſe I write to you in confidence, for I never ſay any thing of a third perſon, which I would not aver to his face, and all I write to you concerning the Pariſians, is no more than a repetition of what I daily advance in converſation with themſelves. They are not in the leaſt diſpleaſed with my freedom; they even join with me in many particulars They complain of our *Muralt*. I am perſuaded, they ſee, and are convinced, how much he hated them, even in his panegyrics, but I am much miſtaken, if in my criticiſm they do not perceive the contrary. The eſteem and gratitude their generoſity inſpires, ſerve to increaſe my freedom, it may be ſerviceable to ſome of them, and, if I

may judge from their manner of receiving truth from my lips, they do not think me below their regard. When this is the caſe, my Julia, true cenſure is more laudable than even true praiſe, for that only ſerves to corrupt the heart of thoſe on whom it is beſtowed, and there are none ſo eager to obtain it as the moſt worthleſs, on the contrary, cenſure may be uſeful, and can only be endured by the moſt deſerving. I ſincerely own, I honour the French as the only people in the world who really love their fellow-creatures, and who are naturally benevolent, but, for this very reaſon, I am leſs inclined to grant them that general admiration they ſeem to expect, even for the faults they acknowledge. If the French had no virtues, I ſhould not mention them; if they had no vices they would not be men, they have too many excellent qualities for indiſcriminate praiſe.

As to the attempts you mention, they are impracticable, becauſe I ſhould be obliged to uſe means which are not only inconvenient, but which you have alſo interdicted. Republican auſterity is not in vogue here, they need more flexible virtues, which are more eaſily adapted to the intereſt of their friends or patrons. They reſpect merit, I confeſs, but the talents that acquire reputation are very different from thoſe which lead to fortune, and, if I am ſo unfortunate as to poſſeſs the latter only, will Julia conſent to become the wife of an adventurer? In England it is quite the contrary, and though their manners are perhaps leſs refined than in France, yet they riſe to fortune by more honourable ſteps; becauſe the people having more

ſhare

ſhare in the government, public eſteem is of more conſequence. You are not ignorant of what Lord B—— propoſed to do for me, and of my intention to juſtify his zeal I can have no objection to any ſpot on the globe except its diſtance from you, O Julia! if it is difficult to procure your hand, it is ſtill more difficult to deſerve ſo great a bleſſing, and yet, methinks it is a noble taſk.

The account you give of your mother's health relieved me from the greateſt anxiety. I perceived your diſtreſs, even before my departure, and therefore I durſt not expreſs my fears, but I thought her ſo changed, that I was apprehenſive ſhe would fall into ſome dangerous illneſs. Be careful of her, becauſe ſhe is dear to me, becauſe my heart reveres her, becauſe all my hopes are centered in her goodneſs, and becauſe ſhe is the mother of my Julia.

As for the two ſuitors, I own, I do not like to hear of them, even in jeſt, but the manner in which you mention them expels my fears, and I will no longer hate theſe unfortunate pretenders, ſince you imagine they are hated by you yet I admire your ſimplicity in believing yourſelf capable of hatred. Do not you perceive that what you take for hatred, is nothing more than the impatience of inſulted love? thus anxious mourns the amorous turtle when its beloved mate is in danger of being caught No, Julia; no, incomparable maid! when you are capable of hatred, I may ceaſe to love you

P. S. Beſet by two importunate rivals! how I pity you! for your own ſake, haſten their diſmiſſion.

LETTER LXXXV.

From JULIA.

I HAVE delivered into Mr Orbe's hands a packet which he has engaged to forward to M. Silveſter, from whom you will receive it; but I caution you, my dear friend, not to open it till you retire into your own chamber, and are quite alone. You will find in this packet a ſmall trinket for your particular uſe.

It is a kind of amulet which lovers gladly wear. The manner of uſing it is very whimſical. It muſt be contemplated for a quarter of an hour every morning, or until it ſoftens the ſpectator into a certain degree of tenderneſs. It is then applied to the eyes, the mouth, and next to the heart, and it is generally eſteemed the beſt preſervative againſt the noxious air of a country infected with gallantry. They even attribute an electrical quality to theſe taliſmans, which is very ſingular, but which acts only upon faithful lovers. They ſay it communicates the impreſſion of kiſſes from one to the other, though at the diſtance of a hundred leagues. I do not pretend to warrant the ſucceſs of this charm from experience; only, this I know, it is your own fault if you do not put it to the proof.

Calm your fears with regard to my two gallants,

lants, or pretenders, call them which you pleaſe. They are gone. peace be with them! ſince they are out of my ſight, I ſhall no longer hate them.

LETTER LXXXVI.

To JULIA.

AND ſo, my Julia, you inſiſt on a deſcription of theſe Pariſian ladies? vain girl! but it is a homage due to your charms. Notwithſtanding all your affected jealouſy, your modeſty, and your love, I have diſcovered more vanity than fear diſguiſed under this curioſity. Be it as it will, I ſhall be juſt, I may ſafely ſpeak the truth, but I ſhould undertake the talk with better ſpirits if I had more to praiſe Why are they not a hundred times more lovely! Would they had ſufficient charms to reflect, by the compariſon, new excellence upon yours.

You complain of my ſilence good heaven! what could I have written? In reading this letter, you will perceive why I love to ſpeak of your neighbours the Valeſian ladies, and why I have hitherto neglected to mention thoſe of this country the firſt continually remind me of you, my Julia, but the others—read, and you will know Few people think as I do of the French ladies, if, indeed, I am not quite ſingular in my opinion. Equity obliges me therefore to give you this hint, that you may ſuppoſe I delineate them, perhaps, not as they are in reality, but as they appear to me Nevertheleſs, if I do them injuſtice in my deſcription, I know you will

not fail to cenſure me; and then will your injuſtice be greater than mine, becauſe the fault is entirely your own.

Let us begin with their exterior qualities. the greateſt number of obſervers proceed no farther. If I ſhould follow their example, the women in this country would have great cauſe to be diſſatisfied they have an *exterior* character as well as an *exterior* face; and, as neither one or the other is much to their advantage, it would be unjuſt to form an opinion of them from either. Their figure, for the moſt part, is only paſſable, and in general rather indifferent than perfect; yet there are exceptions. They are ſlender rather than well-made, and therefore they gladly embrace the faſhions which diſguiſe them moſt; but I find, that in other countries the women are fooliſh enough to imitate theſe faſhions, tho' contrived merely to hide defects which they have not

Their air is eaſy and natural, their manner free and unaffected, becauſe they hate all reſtraint; but they have a certain * *diſinvoltura*, which, tho' it is not entirely deſtitute of grace, they frequently carry even to a degree of abſurdity Their complexion is moderately fair, and they are commonly pale, which does not in the leaſt add to their beauty. With regard to their necks, they are in the oppoſite extreme to the Valeſians. This defect they endeavour to ſupply by art, nor are they leſs ſcrupulous of borrowing an artificial whiteneſs. Though I have ne-

ver

* Freedom, eaſe

ver ſeen theſe objects but at a diſtance, they expoſe ſo much of themſelves, that little remains behind for conjecture. Theſe ladies ſeem in this not to underſtand their own intereſt for if the face is but moderately handſome, the imagination heightens every concealed charm; and, according to the Gaſcon philoſopher, there is no appetite ſo ſtrong as that which was never ſatisfied, eſpecially in this ſenſe.

Their features are not very regular, but they have ſomething in their countenance which ſupplies the place of beauty, and which is ſometimes much more agreeable Their eyes, tho' quick and ſparkling, are neither penetrating nor ſweet. they ſtrive to animate them by the help of *rouge*, but the expreſſion they acquire by this means has more of anger in it than love, nature has given them ſprightlineſs only, and tho' they ſometimes ſeem to ſolicit tenderneſs, they never promiſe a return *.

They have acquired ſo great a reputation for their judgment in dreſs, that they are patterns to all Europe. Indeed, it is impoſſible to adapt ſuch abſurd faſhions with more taſte They are, of all women, the leaſt under ſubjection to their own modes. Faſhion governs in the provinces, but the Pariſians govern faſhion, and every one of them is ſkilled in ſuiting it to her own advantage: the firſt are ignorant and ſervile plagiariſts, who copy even orthographical errors; the latter are like authors, who imitate with judg-

* Speak for yourſelf, my dear philoſopher, others may have been more happy A coquet only promiſes to every body what ſhe ſhould reſerve but for one

judgment, and have knowledge to correct the miſtakes of their original.

Their apparel is more uncommon than magnificent, rather elegant than rich. That rapid ſucceſſion of their faſhions which renders them old and obſolete even from one year to another, and that neatneſs which induces them to change their dreſs ſo frequently, preſerve them from much ridiculous magnificence, they do not however ſpend leſs money on that account, but their expences are better conducted. Inſtead of ſuperb-trimmings and embroidery, in which the Italians pride themſelves, their cloaths are always plain and new. Both ſexes obſerve in this particular the ſame moderation and delicacy, with which I am extremely pleaſed for I like to ſee a coat neither laced nor ſoiled. There is no nation in the world, except our own, where the women eſpecially wear leſs gold and ſilver. The ſame kind of ſtuffs are wore by people of all ranks, ſo that it would be difficult to diſtinguiſh a dutcheſs from a citizen, if the firſt had not ſome marks of diſtinction which the other dares not imitate. But this ſeems to have its inconveniences for whatever is the faſhion at court, is immediately followed in the city, and you never ſee in Paris, as in other countries, a beau or belle of the laſt age Nevertheleſs, it is not here as in moſt other places, where the people of the higheſt rank being alſo the richeſt, the women of faſhion diſtinguiſh themſelves by a degree of luxury which cannot be equalled Had the ladies of the court of France attempted this kind of diſtinction, they would very

ſoon

ſoon have been eclipſed by the wives of the citizens.

What then do you think was their reſource? They took a much more effectual method, and which required more abilities: they knew that the minds of the people were deeply impreſſed with a ſenſe of baſhfulneſs and modeſty. This ſuggeſted to them faſhions not to be eaſily imitated. They perceived that the people could not endure the thoughts of *rouge*, and that they obſtinately perſiſted in calling it by the vulgar name of paint; and therefore they daubed their cheeks, not with paint, but with *rouge*, for change but the name, and the thing is no longer the ſame. They alſo perceived that a bare neck was ſcandalous in the eyes of the public, and for that reaſon they choſe to enlarge the ſcene. They ſaw—many things, which my Julia, young as ſhe is, will ſurely never ſee. In their manners they are governed exactly by the ſame principle which directs their dreſs. That charming diffidence which diſtinguiſhes, honours, and adorns the ſex, appears to them as vile and ignoble, they animate their actions and diſcourſe with ſuch a noble aſſurance, that I am confident they would look any modeſt man out of countenance. Thus they ceaſe to be women, to avoid being confounded with the vulgar, they prefer their rank to their ſex, and imitate women of pleaſure that they themſelves may be above imitation.

I know not how far they may have carried *their* imitation, but I am certain they have not ſucceeded in their deſign of preventing it in others. As to *rouge*, and the faſhion of diſplaying

ing thoſe charms which they ought to conceal, they have made all the progreſs poſſible. The ladies of the city had much rather renounce their natural complexion, and the charms they might borrow from the * *amoroſo penſier* of their lovers, than preſerve the appearance of what they are and if this example has not prevailed among the lower ſort of people, it is only becauſe they dread the inſults of the populace; and thus are an infinite number of women kept within the bounds of decency, by the fear of offending the delicacy of the mob. Their maſculine air, and grenadier-like deportment, is leſs ſtriking, becauſe ſo univerſal, it is conſpicuous only to ſtrangers. From one end of this metropolis to the other there is ſcarce a woman whoſe appearance is not ſufficiently bold to diſconcert any man who has never been accuſtomed to the like in his own country, from this aſtoniſhment proceeds that awkward confuſion which they attribute to all ſtrangers, and which becomes worſe the moment they open their lips. They have not the ſweet voice of their country-women, their accent is hoarſe, ſharp, interrogative, imperious, ſtrong, and louder than that of a man If in the tone of their voice they retain any thing feminine, it is entirely loſt in the boldneſs and impertinence of their manner. They ſeem to enjoy the embarraſſment into which every foreigner is at firſt thrown; but it would probably give them leſs pleaſure, if they were acquainted with its true cauſe

Whe-

* Amorous imagination.

Whether it be, that I, in particular, am prejudiſed in favour of beauty, or whether the power of beauty may not univerſally influence the judgment, I know not, but the handſomeſt women appear to me rather the moſt decent in their dreſs, and in general behave with the greateſt modeſty They loſe nothing by this reſerve; conſcious of their advantages, they know they have no need of borrowed allurements to attract our admiration It may be alſo, that impudence is more intolerably diſguſting when joined with uglineſs, for certainly I ſhould much ſooner be tempted to affront an impertinent ugly woman, than to embrace her, whereas by modeſty ſhe might excite even a tender compaſſion, which is often a harbinger of love But though it is generally remarked, that the prettieſt women are the beſt behaved, yet there is often ſo much affectation in their demeanor, and they are always ſo evidently taken up with themſelves, that one is ſeldom expoſed in this country to that temptation which Mde Muralt ſometimes experienced amongſt the Engliſh ladies, of telling a woman ſhe was handſome, only for the pleaſure of perſuading her to think ſo

Neither the natural gaiety of the French, nor their love of ſingularity, is the only cauſe of this freedom of converſation and behaviour ſo remarkable in theſe ladies, but it is rather to be deduced from their manners, which authoriſe them to be continually in the company of men, from whence each ſex contracts the air, the language, and the behaviour of the other

Our Swiſs ladies, on the contrary, delight in little

little female aſſemblies, in which they are extremely ſocial and happy *, for, though they probably may not diſlike the company of men, yet it is certain their preſence throws a ſort of conſtraint upon them.

In Paris it is quite the reverſe; the women are never eaſy nor ſatisfied without the men. In moſt companies, the lady of the houſe is ſeen alone amidſt a circle of gentlemen; and one cannot help wondering how ſuch an unequal proportion of men can be every-where aſſembled. But Paris is full of *avanturiers*, prieſts and abbes, who ſpend their whole lives in running from houſe to houſe. Thus the women learn to think, act, and ſpeak from the men, whilſt theſe, in return, contract a certain degree of effeminacy; and this ſeems the only conſequence of their trifling gallantry however, they enjoy a fulſome adoration, in which their devotees do not think it worth while to preſerve even the appearance of ſincerity No matter in the midſt of her circle every woman is the ſole object of attention, and that is ſufficient. But if a ſecond female enters, familiarity inſtantly gives place to ceremony, the high airs of quality are aſſumed, the attention of the men becomes divided, and each continues to be a ſecret conſtraint upon the other till the company breaks up.

The

* Things are changed ſince that time By many circumſtances one would ſuppoſe theſe letters to have been written above twenty years ago, but by their ſtyle, and the manners they deſcribe, one would conclude them to be of the laſt century

The Parisian ladies are fond of public diversions that is, they are fond of shewing themselves in public, but the great difficulty, every time they go, is to find a female companion, for decorum will not allow one lady alone to appear in the boxes, even though attended by her husband, or by any other man. It is amazing, in this very social country, how difficult it is to form these parties, out of ten that are proposed, nine generally miscarry they are projected by the desire of being seen, and are broken by the disagreeable necessity for a petticoat-companion. I should imagine the ladies might easily abolish this ridiculous custom. What reason can there be why a woman should not be seen alone in public? Perhaps, there being no reason for it, is the very cause of its continuence. However, upon the whole, it may be prudent to preserve decency where the abolition would be attended with no great satisfaction. What great matter would there be in the privilege of appearing alone at the opera? is it not much better to reserve this exclusive privilege for the private reception of one's friends in one's own house?

It is most certain that numberless secret connections must be produced by this custom of being alone amidst such a number of men. Indeed the world is pretty well convinced of it, since experience has proved the absurdity of that maxim, That temptations are destroyed by being multiplied so that they do not defend this fashion for its decency, but because it is most agreeable, which by-the-bye, I do not believe. For how can any love exist where modesty is held in derision? And what pleasure can there

be in a life which is at once deprived both of love and decency? But as the greateſt evil which theſe ſlaves to diſſipation have to fear, is the want of entertainment, the ladies are ſolicitous for amuſement rather than love; gallantry and attendance is all they require, and provided their danglers are aſſiduous, they are very indifferent about the violence or ſincerity of their paſſion. The words *love* and *lover* are entirely baniſhed even from the moſt private intercourſe of the ſexes, and are ſunk into oblivion with the *darts* and *flames* of ancient romance.

It would ſeem as if the whole order of natural ſenſations were here reverſed. A girl is to have no feelings, paſſions, or attachments; that privilege is reſerved for the married women, and excludes no paramour except their huſbands. The mother had better have twenty lovers, than her daughter one Adultery is conſidered as no crime, and conveys no indecency in the idea. their romances, which are univerſally read for inſtruction, are full of it; and there appears nothing ſhocking in its conſequences, provided the lovers do not render themſelves contemptible by their fidelity O Julia! there are many women in this city who have defiled their marriage-bed a hundred times, yet would preſume, with the voice of impunity, to ſlander an union like ours, that is yet unſullied with infidelity.

One would be apt to imagine, that in Paris marriage is a different inſtitution from what it is in other parts of the world they call it a ſacrament, and yet it has not half the power of a common contract It appears to be nothing more than a private agreement between two per-

perſons to live together, to bear the ſame name, and acknowledge the ſame children, but who, in other reſpects, have no authority one over the other. If a huſband here ſhould pretend to be offended with the ill conduct of his wife, he would be as generally deſpiſed, as if, in our country, he was to take no notice of her ſcandalous behaviour. Nor are the ladies on their parts leſs indulgent to their huſbands; for I have not yet heard of an inſtance of their being puniſhed for having imitated the infidelity of their wives. In ſhort, what better effect can be expected from an union in which their hearts were never conſulted? thoſe who only marry fortune or title ſeem to be under no perſonal obligation.

Even love itſelf has loſt its privilege, and is no leſs degenerated than marriage. As man and wife may be looked upon as a batchelor and a maid, who live together for the ſake of enjoying more liberty; ſo are lovers a kind of people, who, with great indifference, meet for amuſement, through cuſtom, or out of vanity. The heart has nothing to do in theſe attachments, nothing more than certain external conveniences are ever conſulted. It is, in ſhort, to know each other, to dine together, now and then to exchange a few words, or, if poſſible, even leſs than this. An affair of gallantry laſts but a little longer than a viſit, and conſiſts chiefly in a few genteel converſations, and three or four pretty letters, filled with deſcriptions, maxims, philoſophy, and wit. As to experimental philoſophy, it does not require ſo much myſtery; they have wiſely diſcovered the folly of letting ſlip any opportunity of gratification whether it

happens to be the lover or any other man, a man is a man, and why ſhould a lady be more ſcrupulous of being guilty of an infidelity to her lover than to her huſband? After a certain age they may all be conſidered as the ſame kind of puppets, made up by the ſame faſhion-monger, and conſequently the firſt that comes to hand is always the beſt.

As I know nothing of all this from experience, I can relate only what I have heard, and indeed, the repreſentation is ſo very extraordinary, that I have been able to form but an imperfect idea of the matter. That which I chiefly comprehend is, that the lady's gallant is generally regarded as one of the family; that if ſhe happens to be diſſatisfied with him, he is diſmiſſed, or if he meets with a ſervice more to his inclination or advantage, he takes his leave, and ſhe engages a freſh one. There are, I am told, ſome ladies ſo capricious as even to take up with their own huſbands for a while, conſidering them at leaſt as a kind of male creature. This whim, however, ſeldom laſts long and when it is paſt, the good man is entirely diſcarded, and ſhe takes another, or, if he ſhould happen to be obſtinate, why then ſhe takes another and keeps them both

But I could not help aſking the perſon who gave me this ſtrange account, how it was poſſible, after this, to live among theſe diſcarded lovers? Live among them, ſays he, why, they are entire ſtrangers to her ever after; and if they ſhould, by chance, take it into their heads to renew their amours, they would have to begin anew, and would hardly be able to recol-

lect

lect that they had ever been acquainted. I underſtand you, ſaid I, but I have ſome difficulty in reconciling theſe extravagancies. I cannot conceive, how it is poſſible, after ſuch a tender union, to ſee each other with indifference, how the heart can avoid palpitation, even at the name of a perſon once beloved, why they do not tremble when they meet You make me laugh, ſays he, with your tremblings, and ſo you would have our ladies continually fainting away.

Suppreſs a part of this caricature repreſentation, place my Julia in oppoſition to the reſt, and remember the ſincerity of my heart I have nothing more to add

It muſt be confeſſed, however, that many of theſe diſagreeable impreſſions are effaced by cuſtom Though the dark ſide of their character may firſt catch our attention, it is no reaſon why we ſhould be blind to their amiable qualities The charms of their underſtanding and good humour are no ſmall addition to their perſonal accompliſhments. Our firſt repugnance overcome, frequently generates a contrary ſentiment. It is not juſt to take the picture only in its worſt point of view

The firſt inconveniency of great cities is, that mankind are generally diſguiſed, and that in ſociety they appear different from what they really are This is particularly true in Paris with regard to the ladies, who derive from the obſervation of others the only exiſtence about which they are ſolicitous When you meet a lady in public, inſtead of ſeeing a Pariſian, as you imagine, you behold only a phantom of the faſhion her ſtature, dimenſion, gait, ſhape, neck, co-

lour, air, look, language, manners, every thing in ſhort is aſſumed, ſo that, if you were to ſee her in her natural ſtate, you would not know her to be the ſame creature. But this univerſal maſk is by no means to her advantage, for nature's ſubſtitutes are ever inferior to herſelf. Beſides, it is almoſt impoſſible to conceal her entirely; in ſpite of us, ſhe will now and then diſcover herſelf, and in ſeizing her with dexterity conſiſts the true art of obſervation This is indeed no difficult matter, in converſing with the women of this country, for, if you take them off their grand theatre of repreſentation, and conſider them attentively, you will ſee them as they really are, and it is then poſſible that your averſion may be changed into eſteem and friendſhip.

I had an opportunity of verifying this remark laſt week, on a party of pleaſure, to which, along with ſome other ſtrangers, I was, abruptly enough, invited by a company of ladies, probably with a deſign to laugh at us without conſtraint or interruption. The firſt day the project ſucceeded to their wiſh. they immediately began to dart their wit and pleaſantry in ſhowers, but as their arrows were not retorted, their quivers were ſoon empty. They then behaved with great decency, and finding themſelves unable to bring us to *their* ſtyle, they were obliged to conform to ours. I know not whether they were pleaſed with the change, but am ſure it was very agreeable to me; for I ſoon found that I ſtood a better chance to profit by the converſation of theſe females, than from the generality of men Their wit now ſo greatly adorned their natural good ſenſe, that changing my opinion

of

of the ſex, I could not help lamenting, that ſo many amiable women ſhould want reaſon, only becauſe it is their humour to reject it I perceived alſo that their natural graces began inſenſibly to efface the artificial airs of the city: for, without deſign, our manner is generally influenced by the nature of our diſcourſe, and it is impoſſible to introduce much coquettiſh grimace in a rational converſation They appeared much more handſome after they grew indifferent about it, and I perceived, that in order to pleaſe, they need only not diſguiſe themſelves. Hence, I am apt to conclude, that Paris, the pretended ſeat of taſte, is of all places in the world that in which there is the leaſt, ſince all their methods of pleaſing are deſtructive of real beauty.

We continued thus together four or five days, ſatisfied with each other, and with ourſelves. Inſtead of ſatiriſing Paris and its follies, we forgot both Our whole care was to promote the happineſs of our little ſociety. We wanted no ill-natured wit of ſarcaſm to excite our mirth, but our laughter, like your couſin's, was the effect of good humour.

I had yet another reaſon to be confirmed in my good opinion of theſe females. Frequently, in the very midſt of our enjoyment, a perſon would come in abruptly and whiſper the lady of the houſe. She left the room, ſhut herſelf up in her cloſet, and continued writing a conſiderable time. It was natural to ſuppoſe, that her heart was engaged in this correſpondence, and of this one of the company gave a hint, which, however, was rather ill received, a proof at leaſt, that though ſhe might poſſibly have no lovers,

vers, ſhe was not without friends. But judge of my ſurpriſe, when I was informed that theſe ſuppoſed Pariſian ſuitors were no other than the unhappy peaſants of the pariſh, who came in their diſtreſs to implore the protection of their lady; one being unjuſtly taxed, another enrolled in the militia, regardleſs of his age and family, a third groaning under a law-ſuit with a powerful neighbour, a fourth ruined by a ſtorm of hail, was going to be dragged to priſon. In ſhort, each had ſome petition to make, each was patiently heard, and the time we ſuppoſed to be ſpent in an amorous correſpondence, was employed in writing letters in favour of theſe unhappy ſufferers. It is impoſſible to conceive how I was aſtoniſhed to find with what delight, and with how little oſtentation, this young, this gay woman, performed theſe charitable offices. Were ſhe even an Julia, thought I, ſhe could not act otherwiſe! From that moment I continued to regard her with reſpect, and all her faults vaniſhed from my eyes.

No ſooner had my inquiries taken this turn, than I began to diſcover a thouſand advantageous particulars in the very women who before appeared ſo unſupportable. Indeed all ſtrangers are agreed, that, provided you exclude the faſhionable topic, there is no country in the world whoſe women have more knowledge, talk more ſenſibly, with more judgment, and are more capable of giving advice. If from the Spaniſh, Italian, or German ladies we ſhould take the jargon of gallantry and wit, what would there remain of there converſation? and you, my Julia, are not ignorant how it is in general with our country-

country-women But if, with a French woman, a man has reſolution to give up his pretenſions to gallantry, and to draw her out of that favourite fortreſs, ſhe will then make a virtue of neceſſity, and, arming herſelf with reaſon, will fight manfully in the open field. With regard to their goodneſs of heart, I will not inſtance their zeal to ſerve their friends, for, as with the reſt of mankind, that may partly proceed from ſelf-love. But though generally they love nobody but themſelves, long habit will frequently produce in them the effects of a ſincere friendſhip. Thoſe who have conſtancy enough to ſupport an attachment of ten years, commonly continue it to the end of their lives, and they will then love their old friends with more tenderneſs, at leaſt with more fidelity than their new lovers.

One common accuſation againſt the women of this country is, that they do every thing, and conſequently more evil than good, but it may be obſerved in their juſtification, that in doing evil they are ſtimulated by the men, and in doing good are actuated by their own principles. This does not in the leaſt contradict what I ſaid before, that the heart has no concern in the commerce between the two ſexes; for the gallantry of the French has given to the women an univerſal power, which ſtands in no need of tenderneſs to ſupport it. Every thing depends upon the ladies, all things are done either by them or for them: Olympus and Parnaſſus, glory and fortune, are equally under their dominion. Books have no value, nor authors any eſteem, but what the ladies are pleaſed to allow them. Their decrees are abſolute as well in matters of the niceſt

ceſt judgment as in thoſe of the moſt trivial taſte Poetry, criticiſm, hiſtory, philoſophy, politics, are all calculated for the ladies, and even the Bible itſelf has lately been metamorphoſed into a polite romance. In public affairs their influence ariſes from their natural aſcendency over their huſbands, not becauſe they are their huſbands, but becauſe they are men, and it would be monſtrous for a man to refuſe any thing to a lady, even though ſhe were his wife.

This authority, however, implies neither attachment nor eſteem, but merely politeneſs and compliance with cuſtom, for it is as eſſential to French gallantry to deſpiſe the women as to oblige them; and this contempt is taken as a proof, that a man has ſeen enough of the world to know the ſex. Whoever treats them with reſpect is deemed a novice, a knight-errant, one who has known women only in romances. They judge ſo equitably of themſelves, that to honour them is to forfeit their eſteem, ſo that the principle requiſite in a man of gallantry is ſuperlative impertinence.

Let the ladies of this country pretend what they will, they are, in ſpite of themſelves, extremely good-natured. All men who are burdened with a multiplicity of affairs, are difficult of acceſs, and without commiſeration; and in Paris, the centre of buſineſs of one of the moſt conſiderable nations in Europe, the men of conſequence are particularly obdurate thoſe, therefore, who have any thing to aſk, naturally apply to the ladies, whoſe ears are never ſhut againſt the unhappy they conſole and ſerve them. In the midſt of all their frivolous diſſi-

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pation, they do not ſcruple to ſteal a few moments from their pleaſures, and devote them to acts of benevolence, and though there may be ſome women mean enough to make an infamous traffic of their ſervices, there are hundreds, on the contrary, who are daily employed in charitably aſſiſting the diſtreſſed. However, it muſt be confeſſed, that they are ſometimes ſo indiſcreet, as to ruin an unfortunate man they happen not to know, in order to ſerve their own friend. But how is it poſſible to know every body in ſo extenſive a country? or how can more be expected from good nature deſtitute of real virtue, whoſe ſublimeſt effort is not ſo much to do good, as to avoid evil? After all, it muſt be allowed that their inclinations are not naturally bad, that they do a great deal of good, that they do it from their hearts, that they alone preſerve the remains of humanity which is ſtill to be found in Paris, and that without them we ſhould ſee the men avaricious and inſatiable, like wolves devouring each other.

I ſhould not have known any thing of all this, had I not conſulted their comedies and romances, whoſe authors are, perhaps, too apt to ſtumble upon thoſe foibles from which they themſelves are not exempt, rather than the virtues they happen not to poſſeſs, who, inſtead of encouraging their readers by praiſing their real virtues, amuſe themſelves with painting imaginary characters too perfect for imitation. Romances are perhaps the laſt means of inſtruction than remains to a corrupt people. It were to be wiſhed that none were ſuffered to pre-

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pare this medicine but men of honeſt principles and true ſenſibility, authors, whoſe writings ſhould be a picture of their own hearts, who, inſtead of fixing virtue in the heavens, beyond the reach of our nature, would, by ſmoothing the way, inſenſibly tempt us out of the gulph of vice.

But to return to the Pariſian ladies, concerning whom I do not by any means agree in the common opinion. They are univerſally allowed to have the moſt enchanting addreſs, the moſt ſeducing manner; to be the moſt refined coquets, to poſſeſs the moſt ſublime gallantry, and the art of pleaſing to a ſuperlative degree. For my part, I think their addreſs ſhocking, their coquettiſh airs diſguſting, and their manner extremely immodeſt I ſhould imagine that the heart ſhould ſhrink back at all their advances, and I can never be perſuaded, that they can for a ſingle moment talk of love, without ſhewing themſelves incapable of either feeling or inſpiring it.

On the other hand, we find them repreſented as frivolous, artful, falſe, thoughtful, inconſtant, talking well, but without reflection or ſentiment, and evaporating all their merit in idle chit-chat But to me all this appears to be as external as their *rouge* or their hoop-petticoats There are a kind of faſhionable vices which are ſuppoſed neceſſary at Paris, but which are not incompatible with ſenſe, reaſon, humanity, and good nature. Theſe ladies are, in many caſes, more diſcreet, and leſs given to tattling than thoſe of any other country. They are better inſtructed, and the things they are taught have

have a ſtronger effect upon their judgment. In ſhort, if I diſlike them for having diſfigured the proper characteriſtics of their ſex, I eſteem them for thoſe virtues in which they reſemble us, and, my opinion is, that they are better calculated to be men of merit, than amiable women

To conclude If Julia had never exiſted, if my heart had been capable of any other attachment than that for which it was created, I ſhould never have taken a wife or miſtreſs in Paris, but ſhould gladly have choſen a friend, and ſuch a treaſure might poſſibly have conſoled me for the want of the others *.

LETTER LXXXVII.

To JULIA.

SINCE your letter was received, I have been daily with Mr Silveſter, to ſee after the ſmall packet: but my impatience has been ſeven times diſappointed At length, however, on the eighth time of going, I received it, and no ſooner did I get it into my hands, than, without ſtaying to pay the poſtage, even without aſking what it came to, or ſpeaking a word to any body, I ran with it out of doors, and, as if I had been out of my ſenſes, paſſed by the door of my lodgings, though it ſtood open be-

* I ſhall not give my opinion of this letter, but I doubt much, whether a judgment which ſo liberally allows them the qualities they deſpite, and denies them thoſe which they value, will be pleaſing to the French ladies

fore me, and traverſed a number of ſtreets that I knew nothing of, till in about half an hour I found myſelf at the farther end of Paris I was then obliged to take a hackney coach in order to get the more ſpeedily home, which is the firſt time I have made uſe of thoſe conveniences in a morning, indeed it is with regret I uſe them even in an afternoon, to pay ſome diſtant viſits, for my legs are good, and I ſhould be ſorry that any improvement in my circumſtances ſhould make me neglect the uſe of them.

I was a good deal perplexed however, in the coach, as you had laid your injunctions on me to open the packet no where but at home Beſides, I was unwilling to be ſubject to any interruption while I was indulging myſelf in that exquiſite ſatisfaction I find in every thing that comes from you. I held it therefore with an impatience and curioſity which I could ſcarce contain, endeavouring to diſcover its contents through the covers, by preſſing it every way with my hands, from the continual motions of which you would have thought the packet contained fire, and burned the ends of my fingers. Not but that from its ſize, weight, and the contents of your former letter, I had ſome ſuſpicion; but then, how could I conceive you to have found either the opportunity or the artiſt? But what I then could not conceive, is one of the miracles of almighty love the more it ſurpaſſes my conception, the more it enchants my heart, and one of the greateſt pleaſures it gives me ariſes from its myſtery.

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Arrived at length at my lodgings, I flew to my chamber, locked the door, threw myself out of breath into a chair, and with a trembling hand broke open the seal. It was then, Julia, I felt the first effect of this powerful talisman The palpitations of my heart increased at every paper I unfolded, till coming to the last, I was forced to stop and take breath a moment before I could open it. It is open —— my suggestions are true, —— it is so —— it is the portrait of Julia ———O, my love! your divine image is before me! I gaze with rapture on your charms! my lips, my heart, pay them the first homage, my knees bend —— Again my eyes are ravished with your heavenly beauties How immediate, how powerful, is their magical effect! No, Julia, it requires not, as you pretend, a quarter of an hour to make itself perceived, a minute, an instant suffices, to draw from my breast a thousand ardent sighs, and to recal, with thy image, the remembrance of my past happiness. Ah! why must the rapture of having such a treasure in possession be allayed with so much bitterness? how lively is the representation it gives me of days that are no more? In gazing on the portrait, I think I again see my very Julia, and enjoy in imagination those delightful moments, whose remembrance serves now to embitter my life, and which heaven in its anger bestowed on me only to take them away Alas! the next instant undeceives me the pangs of absence throb with increased violence, after the agreeable delusion which suspended them is vanished, and I am in the state of those miserable wretches, whose tortures are

remitted only to render them the more cruel Heavens! what flames have not my eager eyes darted on this unexpected object? how has the ſight of it rouzed in me thoſe impetuous emotions, which your preſence uſed to produce! O, my Julia! were it poſſible for this taliſman to tranſmit to your ſenſes the phrenzy and illuſion of mine —— But why is it not poſſible? why may not thoſe impreſſions, which the mind darts forth with ſuch rapidity, reach as far as Julia? Ah, my charming friend! wherever you are, or however employed, at the time I am writing, at the time your portrait receives the ſame homage I pay to the real object of my adoration, do you not perceive your charming face bedewed with the tears of love and ſorrow? do you not feel the ardour of a lover's kiſſes on your lips, your cheeks, your breaſt? do you not glow all over with the flame imparted from my burning lips? —— Ha! what is that? —— ſomebody knocks —— I will hide my treaſure —— an impertinent breaks in upon me —accurſed be the cruel intruder, for interrupting me in tranſports ſo delightful!—may he never be capable of love, — or may he be doomed like me to pine in abſence!

LETTER LXXXVIII.

To Mrs ORBE.

IT is to you, dear couſin, I am to give an account of the French opera: for although you have not mentioned it in your own letters, and

and Julia has kept your ſecret, I am not at a loſs to whom to attribute that piece of curioſity I have been once at the opera to ſatisfy myſelf, and twice to oblige you, but am in hopes this letter will be my excuſe for going no more. If you command me, indeed I can bear it again; I can ſuffer, I can ſleep there for your ſervice, but to remain awake and attentive is to me an abſolute impoſſibility.

Before I tell you what I think of this famous theatre, I will give you an account of what is ſaid of it here, the opinion of the connoiſſeurs may perhaps rectify mine, where I happen to be miſtaken.

The French opera paſſes at Paris for the moſt pompous, the moſt delightful, the moſt wonderful entertainment that was ever produced by the human genius. It is ſaid to be the moſt ſuperb monument of the magnificence of Louis XIV. In fact, every one is not ſo much at liberty, as you imagine, to give his opinion on ſo grave a ſubject. Every thing may be made a point of diſpute here, except muſic and the opera, but with reſpect to theſe, it may be dangerous not to diſſemble one's thoughts, as the French muſic is ſupported by an inquiſition no leſs arbitrary than ſevere. Indeed, the firſt leſſon which ſtrangers are taught, is, that foreigners univerſally allow that nothing in the whole world is ſo fine as the opera at Paris. The truth is, diſcreet people are ſilent upon this topic, becauſe they dare not laugh except among themſelves.

It muſt be allowed, however, that they repreſent at the opera, at a vaſt expence, not only

all the marvellous things in nature, but many others ſtill more wonderful which nature never produced. Surely Mr Pope meant this theatre, by that where he ſaid one might ſee gods, devils, monſters, kings, ſhepherds, and fairies, all mixed together in one ſcene of confuſion.

This aſſemblage, ſo magnificent and well-conducted, is regarded by the ſpectators as if all the things and characters exhibited were real. On ſeeing the repreſentation of a heathen temple, they are ſeized with a profound reverence, and, if the goddeſs be tolerably pretty, half the men in the pit are immediately pagans. Here the audience is not ſo nice as at the French comedy. Thoſe very ſpectators, who could not there conſider the player as the character he repreſented, cannot at the opera conſider him any otherwiſe. It ſeems as if they were ſhocked at a rational deception, and could give into nothing but what was groſsly abſurd, or perhaps they can more eaſily conceive players to be gods than heroes. Jupiter being of another nature, people may think of him as they pleaſe; but Cato was a man, and how few men are there, who, to judge from themſelves, have any reaſon to think ſuch a man as Cato ever exiſted

This opera, therefore, is not compoſed, as in other places, of a company of mercenaries, hired to furniſh out an entertainment for the public. It is true, they are paid by the public, and it is their buſineſs to attend the opera but the nature of it is quite changed by its becoming a royal academy of muſic, a ſort of ſovereign tribunal that judges without appeal in its own cauſe, and is not very remarkable for juſtice

ſtice and integrity. Thus you ſee, how much in ſome countries the eſſence of things hangs on mere words, and how a reſpectable title may do honour to that which leaſt deſerves it.

The members of this illuſtrious academy are not degraded by their profeſſion in revenge, however, they are excommunicated, which is directly contrary to the cuſtom of all other countries. but, perhaps, having had their choice, they had rather live honourably and be damned, than, as plebeians, go vulgarly to heaven. I have ſeen a modern chevalier on the French theatre, as proud of the profeſſion of a player, as the unfortunate Laberius was formerly mortified at it, although the latter was forced into it by the commands of Cæſar, and recited only his own works *. But then the degraded ancient could not afterwards take his place in the circus among the Roman knights, whilſt the mo-

* Obliged by the tyrant to appear on the ſtage, he lamented his diſgrace, in ſome very affecting verſes, which juſtly irritated every honeſt mind againſt Cæſar *After having lived*, ſaid he, *ſixty years with honour, I left my houſe this morning, a Roman knight, but ſhall return to it this evening an infamous ſtage-player Alas! I have lived a day too long O fortune! if it was my lot to be thus once diſgraced, why did you not force me hither while youth and vigour had left me at leaſt an agreeable perſon but now, what a wretched object do I preſent to the inſults of the people of Rome? a feeble voice, a weak body, a mere corpſe, an animated ſkeleton, which has nothing left of me but my name* The entire prologue which he ſpoke on this occaſion, the injuſtice done him by Cæſar, who was piqued at the noble freedom with which he avenged his offended honour, the affront he received at the circus, the meanneſs of Cicero in upbraiding him, with the ingenious and ſatyrical reply of Laberius, are all preſerved by Aulus Gellius, and compoſe, in my opinion, the moſt curious and intereſting piece in his whole collection.

modern one found his every day at the French comedy, among the firſt nobility in the kingdom And I will venture to ſay, never did they talk at Rome with ſo much reſpect of the majeſty of the Roman people, as they do at Paris of the majeſty of the opera.

This is what I have gathered, chiefly from converſation, concerning this ſplendid entertainment, I will now relate to you what I have ſeen of it myſelf.

Figure to yourſelf the inſide of a large box, about fifteen feet wide, and long in proportion this box is the ſtage; on each ſide are placed ſkreens, at different diſtances, on which the objects of the ſcene are coarſely painted Beyond this is a great curtain, bedaubed in the ſame manner, which extends from one ſide to the other, and is generally cut through, to repreſent caves in the earth, and openings in the heavens, as the perſpective requires So that, if any perſon, in walking behind the ſcenes, ſhould happen to bruſh againſt the curtain, he might cauſe an earthquake ſo violent as to ſhake —— our ſides with laughing The ſkies are repreſented by a parcel of bluiſh rags, hung up with lines and poles, like wet linen at the waſherwoman's. The ſun, for he is repreſented here ſometimes, is a large candle in a lantern The chariots of the gods and goddeſſes are made of four bits of wood, nailed together in the form of a ſquare, and ſuſpended by a ſtrong cord, like a ſwing acroſs the middle is faſtened a board, on which the deity ſits a-ſtraddle, and in the front of it hangs a piece of coarſe canvaſs, bedaubed with paint, to repreſent the clouds

that

that attend on this magnificent car. The bottom of this machine is illuminated by two or three ſtinking, unſnuffed candles, which, as often as the celeſtial perſonage buſtles about and ſhakes his ſwing, ſmoke him deliciouſly with incenſe worthy ſuch a divinity.

As theſe chariots are the moſt conſiderable machines of the opera, you may judge by them of the reſt. A troubled ſea is made of long rollers covered with canvaſs or blue paper, laid parallel, and turned by the dirty underſtrappers of the theatre. Their thunder is a heavy cart, which rumbles over the floor, and is not the leaſt affecting inſtrument of their agreeable muſic. The flaſhes of lightning are made by throwing pinches of powdered roſin into the flame of a link; and the falling thunderbolt is a cracker at the end of a ſquib.

The ſtage is furniſhed with little ſquare trap-doors, which, opening on occaſion, give notice that the infernal demons are coming out of the cellar. And when they are to be carried up into the air, they ſubſtitute dexterouſly in their room little devils of brown canvaſs ſtuffed with ſtraw, or ſometimes real chimney-ſweepers, that are drawn up by ropes, and ride triumphant through the air till they majeſtically enter the clouds, and are loſt among the dirty rags I mentioned. But what is really tragical is, that when the tackle is not well managed, or the ropes happen to break, down come infernal ſpirits and immortal gods together, and break their limbs and ſometimes their necks. To all this I ſhall add their monſters, which certainly make ſome ſcenes very pathetic, ſuch as their dragons, lizards,

lizards, tortoiſes, crocodiles, and great toads, all which ſtalk or crawl about the ſtage with a threatning air, and put one in mind of the temptation of St Anthony, every one of theſe figures being animated by a looby of a Savoyard, that has not even ſenſe enough to play the brute.

Thus you ſee, couſin, in what conſiſts, in a great degree, the ſplendid furniture of the opera, at leaſt, thus much I could obſerve from the pit, with the help of my glaſs, for you muſt not imagine theſe expedients are much hid, or produce any great illuſion. I only tell you here what I ſaw, and what every other unprejudiſed ſpectator might have ſeen as well as myſelf. I was told, nevertheleſs, that a prodigious quantity of machinery is employed to effect all theſe motions, and was ſeveral times offered a ſight of it, but I was never curious to ſee in what manner extraordinary efforts were made to produce inſignificant effects.

The number of people engaged in the ſervice of the opera is inconceivable The orcheſtra and chorus together conſiſt of near an hundred perſons * there is a multitude of dancers, every part being doubly and trebly ſupplied *, that is to ſay, there is always one or two inferior actors ready to take the place of the principal, and who are paid for doing nothing, till the principal is pleaſed to do nothing in his turn, which is ſeldom long of happening After a few repreſentations, the chief actors, who are perſonages of great

* They know nothing of this in Italy, the public would not ſuffer it, and thus the entertainment is ſubject to leſs ex. pence * would coſt too much to be thus ill-ſerved

great conſequence, honour the public no more with their preſence in that piece, but give up their parts to their ſubſtitutes, or to the ſubſtitutes of thoſe ſubſtitutes. They receive always the ſame money at the door, but the ſpectator does not always meet with the ſame entertainment Every one takes a ticket, as he does in the lottery, without knowing what will be his prize, and, be what it will, no body dares complain, for you are to know, that the honourable members of this academy owe no manner of reſpect to the public, it is the public which owes reſpect to them.

I will ſay nothing to you of their muſic, you are acquainted with it already But you can have no idea of the frightful cries and hideous bellowings with which the theatre reſounds during the repreſentation The actreſſes, throwing themſelves into convulſions as it were, rend their lungs with ſqueaking in the mean time, with their fiſts clenched againſt their ſtomachs, their heads thrown back, their faces red, their veins ſwelled, and their breaſts heaving, one knows not which is moſt diſagreeably affected, the eye or the ear Their actions make thoſe ſuffer as much who ſee them, as their ſinging does thoſe who hear them, and what is inconceivable is, that theſe howlings are almoſt the only thing the audience applaud By the clapping of their hands, one would imagine them a parcel of deaf people, delighted to be able to hear the voice now and then ſtrained to the higheſt pitch, and that they ſtrove to encourage the actors to redouble their efforts. For my part, I am perſuaded that they applaud the ſqueak-

ſqueaking of an actreſs at the opera, for the ſame reaſon as they do the tricks of a tumbler or poſture-maſter at the fair it is diſpleaſing and painful to ſee them; one is uneaſy while they laſt; but we are ſo glad to ſee all paſs off without any accident, that we willingly give them applauſe.

Think how well this manner of ſinging is adapted to expreſs all the ſoft and tender writings of Quinault. Imagine the muſes, loves, and graces, imagine Venus herſelf, expreſſing her ſentiments in this delicate manner, and judge of the effects. As to their devils, let us leave their muſic to ſomething infernal enough to ſuit it as alſo that of their magicians, conjurers, and witches; all which, however, meet with the greateſt applauſe at the French opera.

To theſe raviſhing ſounds, as harmonious as ſweet, we may very deſervedly join thoſe of the orcheſtra. Conceive to yourſelf a continual claſhing of jarring inſtruments, attended with the drawling and perpetual groans of the baſe, a noiſe the moſt doleful and inſupportable that I ever heard in my life, and which I could never bear half an hour together without getting a violent head-ach. All this forms a ſpecies of pſalmody, which has commonly neither time nor tune But when, by accident, they hit on an air a little lively, the feet of the audience are immediately in motion, and the whole houſe thunders with their clattering. The pit in particular, with much pains and a great noiſe, always imitate a certain performer in the orcheſtra *. Delighted to perceive for a moment that

* *L. Buchorn*

that cadence which they ſo ſeldom feel, they ſtrain their ears, voice, hands, feet, and in ſhort their whole body, to keep that time which is every moment ready to eſcape them. Inſtead of this, the Italians and Germans, who are more eaſily affected with the meaſures of their muſic, purſue them without any effort, and have never any occaſion to beat time at leaſt, Regianino has often told me, that, at the opera in Italy, where the muſic is ſo affecting and lively, you will never ſee, or hear, in the orcheſtra or among the ſpectators, the leaſt motion of either hands or feet But in this country every thing evinces the dullneſs of their muſical organs their voices are harſh and unpleaſing, their tones affected and drawling, and their tranſitions hard and diſſonant: there is no cadence nor melody in their ſongs, their martial inſtruments, the fifes of the infantry, the trumpets of the cavalry, their horns, their hautboys, the ballad-ſingers in the ſtreets, and the fiddlers in their public-houſes, have all ſomething ſo horribly grating as to ſhock the moſt indelicate ear * All talents are not beſtowed on the ſame men, and the French in general are of all the people in Europe thoſe who have the leaſt aptitude for muſic Lord B—— pretends, that the Engliſh have as little but the difference is, that they know it, and care nothing about the matter, whereas the French give up a thouſand juſt pretenſions, and will ſubmit to be cenſured in any

* The light airs of the French muſic have not been unaptly compared to a cow's-courant, or the hobblings of a fat goſe attempting to fly

other point whatever, ſooner than admit they are not the firſt muſicians in the world. There are even people at Paris who look upon the cultivation of muſic as the concern of the ſtate, perhaps becauſe the improvement of Timotheus's lyre was ſo at Sparta. However this be, the opera here may, for ought I know, be a good political inſtitution, in that it pleaſes perſons of taſte no better. But to return to my deſcription.

The *ballets*, which are the moſt brilliant parts of the opera, conſidered of themſelves, afford a pleaſing entertainment, as they are magnificent and truly theatrical, but, as they enter into the compoſition of the piece, it is in that light we muſt conſider them. You remember the operas of Quinault, you know in what manner the diverſions are there introduced, it is much the ſame, or rather worſe, with his ſucceſſors. In every act, the action of the piece is ſtopt ſhort, juſt at the moſt intereſting period, by an interlude, which is repreſented before the actors, who are ſeated on the ſtage, while the audience in the pit are kept ſtanding. From theſe interruptions it frequently happens, that the character of the piece are quite forgotten, and always that the ſpectators are kept looking at actors, that are looking at ſomething elſe. The faſhion of theſe interludes is very ſimple. If the prince is in a good humour, it partakes of the gaiety of his diſpoſition, and is a dance, if he is diſpleaſed, it is contrived in order to bring him to temper again, and it is a dance. I know not whether it be the faſhion at court to make a ball for the entertainment of the king when he is out of humour; but this I know, with reſpect

to

to our opera kings, that one cannot ſufficiently admire their ſtoical firmneſs and philoſophy, in ſitting ſo tranquil to ſee comic dances and attend to ſongs, while the fate of their kingdoms, crowns, and lives, is ſometimes determined behind the ſcenes But they have beſides many other occaſions for the introduction of dances, the moſt ſerious actions of human life are here performed in a dance The parſons dance, the ſoldiers dance, the gods dance, the devils dance, the mourners dance at their funerals, and in ſhort all their characters dance upon all occaſions

Dancing is thus the fourth of the fine arts employed in the conſtruction of the lyric drama, the other three are arts of imitation And what is imitated in dancing? nothing. It is therefore foreign to the purpoſe, for what buſineſs is there for minuets or rigadoons in a tragedy? Nay, I will venture to ſay, dancing would be equally abſurd in ſuch compoſitions, even though ſomething was imitated by it for of all the dramatic unities, the moſt indiſpenſible is that of language or expreſſion, and an opera made up partly of ſinging, partly of dancing, is even more ridiculous than that in which they ſing half French half Italian

Not content to introduce dancing as an eſſential part of the compoſition, they even attempt to make it the principal, having operas, which they call *ballets*, and which ſo badly anſwer their title, that dancing is no leſs out of character in them than in all the reſt. Moſt of theſe ballets conſiſt of as many different ſubjects as acts, and theſe ſubjects are connected toge-

ther by certain metaphyſical relations, of which the ſpectator would never form the leaſt ſuſpicion or conjecture, if the author did not care to apprize him of it in the prologue. The ſeaſons, ages, ſenſes, elements, are the ſubjects of a dance, but I ſhould be glad to know what propriety there is in all this, or what ideas can by this means be conveyed to the mind of the ſpectator? Some of them again are purely allegorical, as the *carnival*, the *folly*, and are the moſt intolerable of all, becauſe with a good deal of wit and fineſſe, they contain neither ſentiment, deſcription, plot, buſineſs, nor any thing that can either intereſt the audience, ſet off the muſic to advantage, flatter the paſſions, or heighten the illuſion. In theſe pretended ballets, the action of the piece is performed in ſinging, the dancers continually finding occaſion to break in upon the ſingers, though without meaning or deſign. The reſult of all this, however, is, that theſe ballets being leſs intereſting than their interludes, theſe interruptions are little remarked. Were the piece itſelf more affecting, the ſpectator would be more offended, but the one defect ſerves to hide the other, and, in order to prevent the ſpectators being tired with the dancing, the authors artfully contrive it ſo that the piece itſelf may the more heartily tire them.

This would lead me inſenſibly to make ſome enquiries into the true compoſition of the lyric drama, but theſe would be too prolix to be comprized in this letter, I have therefore written a little diſſertation on that ſubject, which you will find incloſed, and may communicate to Regianus. I ſhall only add, with reſpect to the French

French opera, that the greateſt fault I obſerved in it is a falſe taſte for magnificence, whence they attempt to repreſent the marvellous, which, being only the object of imagination, is introduced with as much propriety in an epic poem, as it is ridiculouſly attempted on the ſtage I ſhould hardly have believed, had not I ſeen it, that there could be found artiſts weak enough to attempt an imitation of the chariot of the ſun, or ſpectator ſo childiſh as to go to ſee it Bruyere could not conceive how ſo fine a ſight as the opera could be tireſome For my part, who am no Bruyere, I can conceive it very well, and will maintain, that to every man who has a true taſte for the fine arts, the French muſic, their dancing, and their marvellous ſcenery put together, compoſe the moſt tireſome repreſentation in the world. After all, perhaps the French do not deſerve a more perfect entertainment, eſpecially with reſpect to the performance not becauſe they want ability to judge of what is good, but becauſe the bad pleaſes them better. For, as they love rather to cenſure than applaud, the pleaſure of criticiſing compenſates for every defect, and they had rather laugh after they get home, than be pleaſed with the piece during the repreſentation.

LETTER LXXXIX

From JULIA.

YES, yes, I ſee it well the happy Julia is ſtill dear to you, ſtill enjoys your love, the

ſame fire that once ſparkled in your eyes, glows throughout your laſt letter, and kindles all the ardour of mine. Yes, my friend, in vain doth fortune ſeparate us, let our hearts preſs forward to each other, let us preſerve by ſuch a communication their natural warmth againſt the chilling coldneſs of abſence and deſpair; and let every thing that tends to looſen the ties of our affections, ſerve only to draw them cloſer and bind them more faſt.

You will ſmile at my ſimplicity, when I tell you, that ſince the receipt of your letter, I have experienced ſomething of thoſe charming effects therein mentioned, and that the jeſt of the taliſman, although purely my own invention, is turned upon myſelf and become ſerious. A hundred times a-day am I ſeized, when alone, with a fit of trembling, as if you were before me. I imagine you are gazing on my portrait, and am fooliſh enough to feel, in conceit, the impreſſion of thoſe kiſſes and careſſes you beſtow on it. Sweet illuſion! charming effects of fancy! the laſt reſource of the unhappy! Oh, if it be poſſible, be to us a pleaſing ſubſtitute for reality! you are yet ſomething to thoſe to whom real happineſs is wanting.

As to the manner in which I obtained the portrait, it was indeed the contrivance of love, but, believe me, if it were that mine could work miracles, it would not have made choice of this. I will let you into the ſecret. We had here ſome time ago a miniature painter, on his return from Italy. he brought letters from Lord B——, who perhaps, in ſending him, had ſome view to what has happened. Mr Orbe embraced

ced this opportunity to have a portrait of my couſin, I was deſirous of one alſo. In return, ſhe and my mother would each have one of me, of which the painter at my requeſt took ſecretly a ſecond copy Without troubling myſelf about the original, I choſe of the three that which I thought the moſt perfect likeneſs, with a deſign to ſend it you I made but little ſcruple, I own, of this piece of deceit for, as to the likeneſs of the portrait, a little more or leſs can make no great difference with my mother and couſin, but the homage you might pay to any other reſemblance than mine, would be a kind of infidelity, by ſo much the more dangerous, as my picture might be handſomer than me, and I would not on any account that you ſhould take a liking to charms which I do not poſſeſs. With reſpect to the drapery, I could have liked to have been leſs negligently dreſſed; but I was not heard, and my father himſelf inſiſted on the portrait's being finiſhed as it is, except the head-dreſs However, nothing of the habit was taken from my own, the painter having dreſſed the picture as he thought proper, and ornamented my perſon with the works of his own imagination.

LETTER XC.

To JULIA.

I MUST, my dear Julia, ſtill talk to you of your portrait, no longer, however, in that rapturous ſtrain which the firſt ſight of it inſpi-

red,

red, and with which you yourſelf were ſo much affected; but, on the contrary, with the regret of a man deceived by falſe hopes, and whom nothing can recompenſe for what he has loſt Your portrait, like yourſelf, is both graceful and beautiful, it is alſo a tolerable likeneſs, and is painted by the hand of a maſter, but to be ſatisfied with it, I ought never to have known the original.

The firſt fault I find in it is, that it reſembles you, and yet is not yourſelf; that it has your likeneſs, and is inſenſible. In vain the painter thought to copy your features; where is that ſweetneſs of ſentiment that enlivens them, and without which, regular and beautiful as they are, they are nothing? The ineffable lovelineſs of your countenance, my Julia, is derived from your heart; and what painting can imitate that? This defect therefore muſt be attributed to the imperfection of the art, but it is the fault of the artiſt not to have been exact in every thing that depended on himſelf For inſtance, he has brought the hair too far forward on the temples, which gives the forehead a leſs agreeable and delicate air He has alſo forgotten two or three little veins, ſeen through the tranſparent ſkin in winding branches of purple, reſembling thoſe of the Iris we once ſtood admiring in the gardens of *Clarens* The colouring of the cheeks is alſo too near the eyes, and is not ſoftened into that glowing bluſh of the roſe toward the lower part of the face, which diſtinguiſhes the lovely original One would take it for an artificial *rouge*, plaiſtered on like the carmine of the French ladies. Nor is this defect a ſmall one,

as

as it makes the eyes appear leſs ſoft, and the looks more bold

But tell me, what has he done with thoſe dimples wherein the little cupids lurk at the corners of your mouth, and which in my fortunate days I uſed to ſtifle with kiſſes? He has not given half their beauty to theſe charming lips He has not given the mouth that agreeable ſerious turn, which, changing in an inſtant into a ſmile, raviſhes the heart with inconceivable enchantment, with an inſtantaneous rapture which cannot be expreſſed. It is true, your portrait cannot paſs from the ſerious to a ſmile This is, alas! the very thing of which I complain. To paint all your charms you ſhould be drawn every inſtant of your life.

But to paſs over the injuſtice the painter has done you in overlooking your beauties, he has done you more in having omitted your defects. He has left out that almoſt imperceptible mole under your right eye, as well as that on the right ſide of your neck. He has not—heavens, was the man a ſtatue!——he has forgot the little ſcar under your lip, he has made your hair and eye-brows of the ſame colour, which they are not Your eye-brows are more upon the chefnut, and your hair rather of the aſh colour.

Bionda teſta, occhi azzurri e bruno ciglio

Light hair, blue eyes, and eye-brows lovely brown.

He has made the lower part of the face exactly oval, not obſerving the ſmall hollow between your cheeks and chin, which makes their

out

out lines leſs regular and more agreeable. Theſe are the moſt palpable defects, but he has omitted ſeveral others, for which I owe him no goodwill: for I am not only in love with your beauties, but with Julia herſelf juſt as ſhe is. If you would not be obliged for any charm to the pencil, I would not have you loſe by it the ſmalleſt defect: my heart can never be affected by charms that are not your own.

With reſpect to the drapery, I ſhall take the more notice of it, as, whether in a diſhabille or otherwiſe, I have ever ſeen you dreſſed with more taſte than you are in the portrait: the head-dreſs is too large, you will ſay it is compoſed only of flowers, that is true; but there are too many. Do not you remember the ball, at which you were dreſſed like a country girl, and your couſin told me I danced like a philoſopher? you had then no other head-dreſs than your long treſſes, turned up and faſtened at top with a golden bodkin, in the manner of the villagers of Berne. No, the ſun in all its radiance diſplays not half that luſtre with which you then ſtruck the eyes and captivated hearts of the beholders, and ſurely there is no one who ſaw you that day that can ever forget you during his whole life. It is thus, my Julia, your head ought to have been dreſſed. It is your charming hair that ſhould adorn your face, and not thoſe ſpreading roſes. Tell my couſin, for I diſcover her choice and direction, that the flowers with which ſhe has thus covered and profaned your treſſes, are in no better taſte than thoſe ſhe gathers in *Adonis*. One might overlook them, did they ſerve

as

as an ornament to beauty, but I cannot permit them to hide it.

As to the buſt, it is ſingular that a lover ſhould be more nice in this particular than a father; but, to ſay the truth, I think you are too careleſly dreſſed The portrait of Julia ſhould be modeſt as herſelf Theſe hidden charms ſhould be ſacred to love. You ſay the painter drew them from his imagination I believe it; indeed, I believe it Had he caught the leaſt glimpſe of thine, his eyes would have gazed on them for ever, but his hand would not have attempted to paint them, why was it neceſſary the raſh artiſt ſhould form them in imagination? This was not only an offence againſt decency, but I will maintain it alſo to be want of taſte Yes, your countenance is too modeſt to ſupport the diſorder of your breaſt, it is plain that one of theſe objects ought to hinder the other from being ſeen: it is the privilege of love alone to ſee both together, and when its glowing hand uncovers the charms that modeſty conceals, the ſweet confuſion of your eyes ſhews that you forget not that you expoſe them

Such are the criticiſms that a continual attention has occaſioned me to make on your portrait in conſequence of which I have formed a deſign to alter it, agreeable to my own ideas I have communicated my intentions to an able maſter, and from what he has already done, I hope ſoon to ſee you more like yourſelf For fear of ſpoiling the picture, however, we try our alterations firſt on a copy, which I have made him take, and we do not make them in the original till we are quite ſure of their effect.

Although

Although I deſign but indifferently, my artiſt cannot help admiring the ſubtilty of my obſervations, but he does not know that love, who dictates them, is a greater maſter than he I ſeem to him alſo ſometimes very whimſical he tells me I am the firſt lover that ever choſe to hide objects which others think cannot be too much expoſed, and when I anſwer him, it is in order to have a full view of you that I dreſs you up with ſo much care, he ſtares at me as if he thought me a fool. Ah! my Julia, how much more affecting would be your portrait, if I could but find out the means to diſplay in it your mind, as well as your face, to paint at once your modeſty and your charms! what would not the latter gain by ſuch an amendment! at preſent thoſe only are ſeen which the painter imagined, and the raviſhed ſpectator thinks them ſuch as they are I know not what ſecret enchantment is about your perſon, but every thing that touches you ſeems to partake of its virtue one need only perceive the hem of your garment to revere the wearer of it One perceives in your dreſs how the vail of the graces affords a covering to the model of beauty, and the taſte of your modeſt apparel diſplays to the mind all thoſe charms it conceals

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LETTER XCI.

To JULIA

JULIA! O Julia! you whom once I could call mine, though now I profane your virtuous name!

name! my pen drops from my trembling hand, the paper is blotted with my tears, I can hardly trace the firſt words of a letter, which ought never to be written; alas! I can neither ſpeak nor be ſilent. Come, thou dear and reſpectable image of my love, come, purify and ſtrengthen a heart depreſſed with ſhame and torn to pieces by remorſe Support my reſolution that fails me, and give my contrition the power to avow the involuntary crime which thy abſence has led me to commit

How contemptible will you think me! yet cannot you hold me in greater contempt than I do myſelf. Abject as I may ſeem in your eyes, I am yet a hundred times more ſo in my own for, in reflecting on my own demerits, my greateſt mortification is to ſee, to feel you ſtill in my heart, in a place henceforward ſo little worthy of your image, and to think that the remembrance of the trueſt pleaſures of love could not prevent me from falling into a ſnare that had no lure, from being led into a crime that preſented no temptation.

So exceſſive is my confuſion, that I am afraid, even in recurring to your clemency, leſt the peruſal of the lines in which I confeſs my guilt ſhould offend you. Let your purity and chaſtity forgive me a recital which ſhould have ſpared your modeſty, were it not the means to expiate, in ſome degree, my infidelity. I know I am unworthy of your goodneſs I am vile, baſe, and deſpicable; but I will not be an hypocrite, or deceive you; for I had rather you ſhould deprive me of your love, and even life itſelf, than to impoſe on you but for a moment. Leſt

I ſhould be tempted, therefore, to ſeek excuſes to palliate my crime, which will only render me the more criminal, I will confine myſelf to an exact relation of what has happened to me, a relation that ſhall be as ſincere as my repentance, which is all I ſhall ſay in my defence.

I had commenced acquaintance with ſome officers in the guards, and other young people among my countrymen, in whom I found a good innate diſpoſition, which I was ſorry to ſee ſpoiled by the imitation of I know not what falſe airs, which nature never deſigned for them They laughed at me in their turn, for preſerving in Paris the ſimplicity of our ancient Helvetian manners, and, conſtruing my maxims and behaviour into an indirect cenſure of theirs, reſolved to make me a convert to their own practices, at all hazards. After ſeveral attempts which did not ſucceed, they made another too well concerted to fail of ſucceſs. Yeſterday morning they came to me with a propoſal to go ſup with the lady of a certain colonel they mentioned, who, from the report, they were pleated to ſay, of my good ſenſe, had a great deſire to be acquainted with me Fool enough to give into this idle ſtory, I repreſented to them the propriety of firſt making her a viſit, but they laughed at my punctilios, telling me the frankneſs of a Swiſs did not at all agree with ſuch formality, and that ſo much ceremony would only ſerve to give her a bad opinion of me At nine o'clock then in the evening we waited on the lady. She came out to receive us on the ſtair-caſe, through an exceſs of civility which I had never ſeen practiſed before. Having

ving entered the apartment, I obſerved a ſervant lighting up pieces of old wax candles over the chimney, and over all an air of preparation which did not at all pleaſe me The miſtreſs of the houſe appeared handſome, though a little paſt her prime there were alſo ſeveral other women with her much about the ſame age, and ſimilar in figure, their dreſs, which was rich enough, had more of finery in it than taſte, but I have already obſerved to you that this is not a ſure ſign by which to judge of the condition of the women of this country

The firſt compliments were made as uſual, cuſtom teaching one to cut them ſhort, or to turn them into pleaſantry, before they grow tireſome Something unuſual however appeared as ſoon as our converſation became general and ſerious. I thought the ladies ſeemed to wear an air of reſtraint, as if ſuch diſcourſe were not familiar to them and now, for the firſt time ſince I have been at Paris, I ſaw women at a loſs to ſupport a rational converſation To find an eaſy topic, they brought up at length their family-affairs, and as I knew none of them, I had little ſhare in the converſation Never before did I hear ſo much talk of the colonel, and the colonel, which not a little ſurpriſed me, in the country where it is uſual to diſtinguiſh people rather by their names than by their profeſſion, and in which almoſt every man of rank in the army has ſome other title of diſtinction beſides

This affectation of dignity ſoon gave way to a behaviour more natural to them they began to talk low, and running inſenſibly into an air

of indecent familiarity, they laughed and whiſpered every time they looked at me, while the lady of the houſe aſked me the ſituation of my heart, with a certain boldneſs of manner not at all adapted to make a conqueſt of it The table was ſpread, and that freedom which ſeems to make no diſtinction of perſons, but generally puts every one without deſign in the proper place, fully convinced me what ſort of company I was in. But it was too late to recede putting my confidence therefore in my averſion, I determined to apply that evening to obſervation, and to employ in the ſtudy of that order of women, the only opportunity I ever had, or might have. Little, however, was the fruit of my obſervation They were ſo inſenſible to their preſent ſituation, ſo void of apprehenſions for the future, and, excepting the tricks of their profeſſion, ſo ſtupid in all reſpects, that contempt ſoon effaced the pity I firſt entertained for them. In ſpeaking even of pleaſure itſelf, I ſaw they were incapable of feeling it. They appeared rapacious after every thing that could gratify their avarice and, excepting what regarded their intereſt, I heard not a word drop from their lips that came from the heart I was aſtoniſhed to think how men, not abandoned like themſelves, could ſupport ſo diſguſtful a ſociety. It were, in my opinion, the moſt cruel puniſhment that could be inflicted, to oblige them to keep ſuch company.

We ſat a long while at ſupper, and the company at length began to grow noiſy For want of love, the wine went briſkly round to inflame the gueſts the diſcourſe was not tender but

immodeſt, and the women ſtrove, by the diſorder of their dreſs, to excite thoſe paſſions which ſhould have cauſed that diſorder. All this had a very different effect upon me, and all their endeavours to ſeduce me, ſerved only to heighten my diſtaſte. Sweet modeſty! (ſaid I to myſelf,) from whom love draws its ſublimeſt raptures, how impotent are female charms when thou haſt left them! If the ſex did but know thy power, what pains would they not take to preſerve thee inviolate, if not for the ſake of virtue, at leaſt for their intereſt! But modeſty is not to be aſſumed. There is not a more ridiculous artifice in the world than that of the prude who affects it. What a difference, thought I, is there between the impudence of theſe creatures, with their licentious expreſſions, and thoſe timid and tender looks, thoſe converſations ſo full of modeſty, ſo delicate, ſo ſentimental, which—but I dare not finiſh the ſentence, I bluſh at the compariſon—I reproach myſelf, as if it were criminal, with the delightful remembrance of her who purſues me wherever I go. But how ſhall I now dare to think of her?—alas! it is impoſſible to eraſe your image from my heart, let me then ſtrive to conceal it there.

The noiſe, the diſcourſe I heard, together with the objects that preſented themſelves to my view, inſenſibly inflamed me, my two neighbours plied me inceſſantly with wine. I found my head confuſed, and, though I drank all the while a good deal of water in my wine, I now took more water, and at length determined to drink water only. It was then I perceived the pretended water ſet before me was white wine,

and that I had drank it from the firſt. I made no complaints, as they would only have ſubjected me to raillery, but gave over drinking entirely. But it was too late, the miſchief was already done, and the intoxicating effects of what I had already drank ſoon deprived me of the little ſenſe that remained. I was ſurpriſed, in recovering my ſenſes, to find myſelf in a retired cloſet, locked in the embraces of one of thoſe creatures I had ſupped with, and in the ſame inſtant had the mortification to find myſelf as criminal as I could poſſibly be.

I have finiſhed this horrible relation Would to heaven it might never more offend your eyes, nor torture my memory! O Julia! from thee I wait my doom. I implore your ſeverity, I merit it. Whatever be my puniſhment, it will be leſs cruel than the remembrance of my crime.

LETTER XCII.

The ANSWER.

BE eaſy as to the fear of having offended me Your letter rather excited my grief than my anger. It is not me, it is yourſelf you have offended, by a debauch in which the heart had no ſhare. I am at this, however, but the more afflicted; for I had much rather you ſhould affront Julia than debaſe yourſelf; and the injury you have done to your own perſon is that only which I cannot forgive.

To regard only the fault of which you accuſe yourſelf you are not ſo culpable as you imagine

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as to that, I can only reproach you with imprudence But what I blame you for, is of great moment, and proceeds from a failing that has taken deeper root than you imagine, and which it is the part of a friend to lay before you.

Your firſt error lies in having taken a wrong path, in which the farther you advance the more you will go aſtray, and I tremble to ſee that you are inevitably loſt, if you do not tread back the ſteps you have taken. You have ſuffered yourſelf to be led inſenſibly into the very ſnares I dreaded. The more groſs and palpable allurements of vice I knew could not ſeduce you; but the bad company you keep hath begun, by deluding your reaſon, to corrupt your virtue, and hath already made the firſt eſſay of its maxims on your behaviour.

Though you have told me nothing in particular of the acquaintance you have made in Paris, it is eaſy to judge of them by your letters; and of thoſe who point out the objects, by your manner of deſcribing them. I have not concealed from you how little ſatisfied I have been with your remarks, you have nevertheleſs continued them in the ſame ſtyle, which has only increaſed my diſpleaſure. In fact, one would rather take your obſervations for the ſarcaſms of ſome petit-maitre, than for the animadverſions of a philoſopher, and it is hardly poſſible to believe them written by the ſame hand that wrote your former letters What! do you think to ſtudy mankind by the confined behaviour of a few ſocieties of finical prudes and other idlers? Do none of your remarks penetrate beyond the exterior and changeable varniſh which ought hard-

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ly to have engaged your attention? Was it worth while to collect with ſo much care thoſe peculiarities of manners and decorum, which ten years hence will no longer exiſt, while the unalterable ſprings of the human heart, the conſtant and ſecret workings of the paſſions, have eſcaped your reſearches? Let us turn to your letter concerning women, in what have you inſtructed me to know them? You have given indeed a deſcription of their dreſs, which all the world might be as well acquainted with, and have made ſome malicious obſervations on the addreſs and behaviour of ſome, as alſo of the irregularities of a few others, which you have unjuſtly attributed to them all, as if no perſon of virtuous ſentiments was to be found in Paris, and every woman flaunted about there in her chariot, and ſat in the front boxes. Have you told me any thing that can throw real light upon their true character, taſte, or maxims? and is it not ſtrange, that in deſcribing the women of a country, a man of ſenſe ſhould omit what regards their domeſtic concerns and education of their children? The only circumſtance in that letter characteriſtic of its author is the apparent ſatisfaction with which you commend the goodneſs of their natural diſpoſition, which, I muſt confeſs, doth honour to yours And yet you have in that done no more than barely rendered juſtice to the ſex in general? for in what country are not gentleneſs of manners and compaſſion for the diſtreſſed the amiable qualities of the women!

What a difference had there been in the picture, if you had deſcribed what you had ſeen rather

rather than what you had heard; or, at leaſt, if you had only conſulted people of ſenſe on the occaſion? Was it for you, who have taken ſo much pains to cultivate your genius, to throw away your time deliberately in the company of a parcel of inconſiderate young fellows, who take pleaſure in the ſociety of perſons of virtue and underſtanding, not to imitate, but only to ſeduce and corrupt them? You lay a ſtreſs on the equality of age, with which you ſhould have nothing to do, and forgot that of ſenſe and knowledge, which is more peculiarly eſſential In ſpite of your violent paſſions, you are certainly the moſt pliable man in the world, and, notwithſtanding the ripeneſs of your judgment, permit yourſelf to be conducted ſo implicitely by thoſe you converſe with, that you cannot keep company with young people of your own age without condeſcending to become a mere infant in their hands Thus you miſtake in your choice of proper companions, and debaſe yourſelf in not fixing upon ſuch as have more wiſdom than yourſelf

I do not reproach you with having been inadvertently taken into a diſhoneſt houſe, but with having been conducted thither by a party of young officers, who ought never to have known you, or at leaſt, whom you ſhould never have permitted to direct your amuſements. As to your project of making them converts to your own principles, I diſcover in it more zeal than prudence; if you are of too ſerious a turn to be their companion, you are too young to be their tutor, and you ought not to think of reform-

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ing others till there is nothing left to reform in yourself.

The next fault, which is of more moment and less pardonable, is to have passed voluntarily the evening in a place so unworthy of you, and not to have left the house the moment you knew what it was. Your excuses on this head are mean and pitiful. You say *it was too late to recede*, as if any decorum were necessary to be observed in such a place, or as if decorum ought ever to take place of virtue, and that it were ever too late to abstain from doing evil. As to the security you found in your aversion to the manners of such a company, I will say nothing of it, the event has shewn you how well it was founded. Speak more freely to one who so well knows how to read your heart; it was shame that kept you from leaving your companions, you were afraid they would laugh at you, a momentary hiss struck you with fear, and you chose rather to expose yourself to remorse than raillery. Do you know what a maxim you followed on this occasion? that which first vitiates every innocent mind, drowns the voice of conscience in public clamour, and represses the resolution of doing well by the fear of censure. Such a mind may overcome temptations, yet yield to the force of bad examples; may blush at being really modest, yet become impudent through bashfulness, a false bashfulness that is more destructive to a virtuous mind than bad inclinations. Look well then to the security of yours, for, whatever you may pretend, the fear of ridicule which you affect to despise, prevails over you in spite of yourself. You would rather brave a hundred dangers

dangers than the raillery of a moment, and never was ſeen ſo much timidity united to ſo intrepid a mind

Without making a parade of precepts which you know better than I, I ſhall content myſelf with propoſing a method more eaſy and ſure, perhaps, than all the arguments of philoſophy. This is, on ſuch occaſions, to make in thought a ſlight tranſpoſition of circumſtances, to anticipate a few minutes of time. If, at that unfortunate ſupper, you had but fortified yourſelf againſt a moment's raillery, by the idea of the ſtate of mind you ſhould be in as ſoon as you got into the ſtreet; had you repreſented to yourſelf that inward contentment you ſhould feel at having eſcaped the ſnares laid of vice, the conſciouſneſs of having avoided the danger, the pleaſure it would give you to write me an account of it, that which I ſhould myſelf receive in reading it, is it to be ſuppoſed all theſe circumſtances would not have over-balanced the mortification of being laughed at for a moment, a mortification you would never have dreaded, could you but have foreſeen the conſequences? But what is this mortification, which gives conſequence to the raillery of people for whom one has no eſteem? This reflection would infallibly have ſaved you, in return for a moment's imaginary diſgrace, much real and more durable ſhame, remorſe, and danger, it would have ſaved (for why ſhould I diſſemble!) your friend, your Julia, many tears

You determined, you tell me, to apply that evening to obſervation What an employment! what obſervation! How your excuſes make me bluſh!

bluſh! Will you not alſo, when an opportunity offers, have the ſame curioſity to make obſervations on robbers in their dens? and to ſee the methods they take to ſeize their prey, and ſtrip the unhappy paſſengers that fall into their hands? Are you ignorant that there are objects too deteſtable for a man of probity to look on, and that the indignation of virtue cannot endure the ſight of vice?

The philoſopher remarks indeed the public licentiouſneſs which he cannot prevent; he ſees it, and his countenance betrays the concern it gives him but as to that of individuals, he either oppoſes it or turns away his eyes from the ſight, leſt he ſhould give it a ſanction by his preſence.

Beſides, what neceſſity was there to be eye-witneſs of ſuch ſcenes, in order to judge of what paſſed, or the converſation that was held there? For my part, I can judge more eaſily of the whole, from the intention and deſign of ſuch a ſociety, than from the little you tell me of it, and the idea of thoſe pleaſures that are to be found there, gives me a ſufficient inſight into the characters of ſuch as go to ſeek them.

I know not if your commodious ſcheme of philoſophy has already adopted the maxims, which, it is ſaid, are eſtabliſhed in large towns, for the toleration of ſuch places but I hope, at leaſt, you are not one of thoſe who debaſe themſelves ſo much as to put them in practice, under the pretext of I know not what chimerical neceſſity, that is known only to men of debauched lives, as if the two ſexes were in this reſpect of a dif-

a different conſtitution; and that, during abſence or celibacy, a virtuous man is under a neceſſity of indulging himſelf in liberties which are denied to a virtuous woman. But if this error does not lead you to proſtitutes, I am afraid it will continue to lead your imagination aſtray. Alas! if you are determined to be deſpicable, be ſo at leaſt without pretext; and add not the vice of lying to that of drunkenneſs All thoſe pretended neceſſities have no foundation in nature, but in the voluntary depravation of the ſenſes. Even the fond illuſions of love are refined by a chaſte mind, and pollute it only when the heart is firſt depraved. On the contrary, chaſtity is its own ſupport, the deſires conſtantly repreſſed accuſtom themſelves to remain at reſt, and temptations are only multiplied by the habit of yielding to them. Friendſhip has made me twice overcome the reluctance I had to write on ſuch a ſubject, and this ſhall be the laſt time, for on what plea can I hope to obtain that influence over you, which you have refuſed to virtue, to love, and to reaſon?

I now return to the important point with which I began this letter. At one-and-twenty years of age you ſent me, from the Valais, grave and judicious deſcriptions of men and things: at twenty-five you write me from Paris a pack of trifling letters, wherein good ſenſe is ſacrificed to a certain quaintneſs and pleaſantry, very incompatible with your character. I know not how you have managed, but ſince you have reſided among people of refined talents, yours appear to be diminiſhed. you profited among

clowns, and have loſt by the wits. This is not, however, the fault of the place you are in, but of the acquaintance you have made. for nothing requires a greater judgment than to make a proper choice in a mixture of the excellent and execrable. If you would ſtudy the world, keep company with men of ſenſe, who have known it by long experience and obſervations made at leiſure, not with giddy-headed boys, who ſee only the ſuperficies of things, and laugh at what they themſelves make ridiculous. Paris is full of ſenſible men, accuſtomed to reflection, and to whom every day preſents a fertile field for obſervation. You will never make me believe that ſuch grave and ſtudious perſons run about, as you do, from houſe to houſe, and from club to club, to divert the women and young fellows, and turn all philoſophy into chit-chat They have too much dignity thus to debaſe their characters, proſtitute their talents, and give a ſanction by their example to modes which they ought to correct. But if even moſt of them ſhould, there are certainly many who do not, and it is thoſe you ought to have choſen for companions.

Is it not extraordinary that you ſhould fall into the very ſame error in your behaviour, which you blame in the writings of the comic poets, from which you ſay one would imagine Paris was peopled only by perſons of diſtinction? Theſe are your conſtant theme, while you take not the leaſt notice of thoſe of your own rank, as if the ridiculous prejudices of nobility had not coſt you ſufficiently dear to make you hate them for ever, or that you thought you degraded your-

yourſelf in keeping company with honeſt citizens and tradeſmen, the moſt reſpectable order of men, perhaps, in the whole country. It is in vain you endeavour to excuſe yourſelf, in that your acquaintance are thoſe of Lord B———: with the aſſiſtance of theſe, you might eaſily have made others of an inferior rank. So many people are deſirous to riſe, that it is always eaſy to deſcend, and by your own confeſſion, the only way to come at the true manners of a nation is to ſtudy the private life of the moſt numerous order among them; for to confine your obſervations to thoſe who only perſonate aſſumed characters, is only to obſerve the actions of a company of comedians.

I would have your curioſity exerted ſtill farther. How comes it, that in ſo opulent a city, the poor people are ſo miſerable, while ſuch extreme diſtreſs is hardly ever experienced among us, where, on the other hand, we have no examples of immenſe wealth? This queſtion is, in my opinion, well worth your aſking, but it is not the people you converſe with that are to reſolve it. It is in the ſplendid apartments of the rich that the novice goes to learn the manners of the world, but the man of ſenſe and experience betakes himſelf to the cottages of the poor. Theſe are the places for the detection of thoſe iniquitous practices, that in polite circles are varniſhed over and hid beneath a ſpecious ſhew of words. It is here that the rich and powerful, by coming to the knowledge of the baſeſt arts of oppreſſion, feel for the unhappy what in public they only affect. If I may believe our old officers, you will learn

many things in the garrets of a fifth floor, which are buried in profound ſilence at the *hotels* in the ſuburbs of St Germain: you will find that many fine talkers would be ſtruck dumb, if all thoſe they have made unhappy were preſent to contradict their boaſted pretenſions to humanity.

I know the ſight of miſery that excites only fruitleſs pity is diſagreeable, and that even the rich turn away their eyes from the unhappy objects to whom they refuſe relief but money is not the only thing the unfortunate ſtand in need of, and they are but indolent in well-doing who can exert themſelves only with their purſe in hands. Conſolation, advice, concern, friends, protection, theſe are all ſo many reſources which compaſſion points out to thoſe who are not rich, for relief of the indigent. The oppreſſed often ſtand in need only of a tongue to make known their complaints. They often want no more than a word they cannot ſpeak, a reaſon they are aſhamed to give, to gain entrance at the door of a great man The intrepid countenance of diſintereſted virtue may remove infinite obſtacles, and the eloquence of a man of probity make even a tyrant tremble in the midſt of his guards.

If you would then act as a man, learn to deſcend again Humanity, like a pure ſalutary ſtream, flows always downwards to its level: fertiliſing the humble vales, while it leaves dry thoſe barren rocks, whoſe threatning heads caſt a frightful ſhade, or tumbling headlong down involve the plain in ruins.

Thus, my friend, may you make uſe of the paſt

paſt conduct, by drawing thence inſtructions for the future; and learn how goodneſs of heart may be of advantage to the underſtanding. whoever lives among people in office, cannot be too cautious of the corruptible maxims they inculcate; and it is only the conſtant exerciſe of their benevolence that can ſecure the beſt hearts from the contagion of ambition. Try this new kind of ſtudy, it is more worthy of you than thoſe you have hitherto adopted; and, believe me, as the genius is impoveriſhed in proportion as the mind is corrupted, you will ſoon find, on the contrary, how much the practice of virtue elevates and improves it: you will experience how much the intereſt you take in the misfortunes of others will aſſiſt you in tracing their ſource, and will thereby learn to eſcape the vices that produce them

I ought to take all the freedom with you that friendſhip authoriſes in the critical ſituation in which you at preſent appear, leaſt a ſecond ſtep towards debauchery ſhould plunge you beyond recovery. At the ſame time, I cannot conceal from you, my friend, how much your ready and ſincere confeſſion has affected me; as I am ſenſible how much ſhame and confuſion it muſt have coſt you, and from thence how heavy this unlucky error muſt ſit upon your heart An involuntary crime, however, is eaſily forgiven and forgot. But, for the future, remember well that maxim, from which I ſhall never recede, He who allows himſelf a ſecond time to be deceived on theſe occaſions, cannot be ſaid to have been deceived the firſt.

Adieu, my friend, be careful, I conjure you,

of your health; and be aſſured I ſhall not retain the leaſt remembrance of a fault I have once forgiven.

P. S I have ſeen in the hands of Mr Orbe the copies of ſeveral of your letters to Lord B——, which oblige me to retract part of the cenſure I have paſſed on the matter and manner of your obſervations. Theſe letters, I muſt confeſs, treat of important ſubjects, and appear to be full of ſerious and judicious reflections. But hence it is evident, that you either treat my couſin and me diſdainfully, or that you ſet little value on our eſteem, in ſending us ſuch trivial relations as muſt tend to forfeit it, while you tranſmit ſo much better to your friend. It is, in my opinion, doing little honour to your inſtructions to think your ſcholars unworthy to admire your talents. for you ought to affect at leaſt, were it only through vanity, to think us capable of it.

Political matters, I confeſs, are not proper ſubjects for women; and my uncle has tired us with them ſo heartily, that I can eaſily conceive you were afraid of doing ſo too. To ſpeak freely, alſo, theſe are not the topics I prefer: their utility is too foreign to affect me, and their arguments too ſubtile to make any laſting impreſſion. Bound to reſpect the government under which it is my fate to have been born, I give myſelf no trouble to inquire whether there are any better. To what end ſhould I be inſtructed to the knowledge of governments, with ſo little power to eſtabliſh them? and why ſhould I afflict myſelf with the conſideration of evils

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too great for me to remedy, when I am ſurrounded with others that are in my power to redreſs? But I love you, the intereſt I ſhould not take in the ſubject, I ſhould take in him who treats it I collect with a pleaſing admiration all the fruits of your genius, and, proud of merit ſo deſerving of my heart, I beſeech of love only ſo much wit as to make me reliſh yours. Refuſe me not then the pleaſure of knowing and admiring your works of merit. Why will you mortify me ſo much as to give me reaſon to think, that, if heaven ſhould ever unite us, you will not judge your companion worthy to know your ſentiments and adopt them.

LETTER XCIII.

From JULIA.

ALL is loſt! all is diſcovered! your letters are gone! they were there laſt night, and could have been taken away but to-day. It is my mother. it can be nobody elſe If my father ſhould ſee them, my life is in danger. But why ſhould he not ſee them, if I muſt renounce —Heavens! my mother ſends for me. Whither ſhall I fly? how ſhall I ſupport her preſence? O that I could hide myſelf in the centre of the earth! I tremble every limb, and am unable to move one ſtep—the ſhame, the mortification, the cutting reproaches—I have deſerved it, I will ſupport it all. But oh! the pangs, the tears of an afflicted mother—O my heart, how piercing!—She waits for me, I can ſtay no longer—

longer—She will know—I muſt tell her all—Regianino will be diſmiſſed. Write no more till you hear further—who knows if ever—yet I might—what, deceive her!——deceive my mother!—alas! if our ſafety lies in ſupporting a falſehood, farewell, we are indeed undone!

LETTER XCIV.

From Mrs ORBE.

O WHAT evils, what diſtreſs, you cauſe to all thoſe who love you! what tears have already been ſhed on your account in an unfortunate family, whoſe tranquillity has been diſturbed by you alone! Dread to add to theſe tears by covering us with mourning: tremble leaſt the death of an afflicted parent ſhould be the laſt effect of the poiſon you have poured into the heart of her child, and that your extravagant paſſion will at length fill you with eternal remorſe. My friendſhip made me ſupport your folly, while there remained a ſhadow of hope to nouriſh it, but how can it allow a vain conſtancy which honour and reaſon condemn, and which, producing nothing but pain and misfortune, can only deſerve the name of obſtinacy?

You know in what manner the ſecret of your paſſion, ſo long concealed from the ſuſpicions of my aunt, has been diſcovered by your letters. How ſenſibly muſt ſuch a ſtroke be felt by a tender and virtuous mother! Leſs irritated againſt you than againſt herſelf, ſhe blames her blind negligence, ſhe deplores her fatal deluſion; her deep-

deepeſt affliction ariſes from her having had too high an eſteem for her daughter; and her grief has filled Julia with a hundred times more ſorrow than all her reproaches.

The diſtreſs of my poor couſin is not to be conceived. No idea can be formed of it without ſeeing her Her heart ſeems ſtifled with grief, and the violence of the ſenſations by which it is oppreſſed, gives her an air of ſtupidity more terrifying than the moſt piercing cries She continues night and day by her mother's bed with a mournful look, her eyes fixed on the floor, and profoundly ſilent, yet ſerving her with greater attention and vivacity than ever, then inſtantly relapſing into a ſtate of dejection, ſhe appears to be no longer the ſame perſon. It is very evident, that the mother's illneſs ſupports the ſpirits of her daughter; and if an ardent deſire to ſerve her did not give her ſtrength, the extinguiſhed luſtre of her eyes, her paleneſs, her extreme grief, make me apprehenſive ſhe would herſelf ſtand in great need of the aſſiſtance ſhe beſtows. My aunt likewiſe perceives it, and I ſee, from the earneſtneſs with which ſhe recommends Julia's health to my care, how her poor heart is agitated, and how much reaſon we have to hate the deſtroyer of an union ſo pleaſing, and once ſo happy

This anxiety is ſtill increaſed by the care of hiding from a paſſionate father, a dangerous ſecret, which the mother, trembling for the life of her daughter, would conceal She has reſolved to obſerve in his preſence their former familiarity, but if maternal tenderneſs with pleaſure takes advantage of this pretext, a daughter

filled

filled with confuſion dares not yield her heart to careſſes which ſhe believes feigned, and which are the more painful, in proportion as they would be engaging, could ſhe preſume to think them real. In receiving the fond careſſes of her father ſhe looks towards her mother with an air ſo tender, and ſo humble, that ſhe ſeems to ſay, Ah! why am I not ſtill worthy to receive ſuch tenderneſs from you!

From the frequent converſations I have had with the baroneſs ſince the unlucky diſcovery, I can eaſily find by the mildneſs of her reprimands, and by the tone in which ſhe ſpoke of you, that Julia has endeavoured, to the utmoſt of her power, to calm her too juſt indignation, and that ſhe has ſpared no pains to juſtify us both at her own expence. Even your letters, beſides a violent paſſion, contain a kind of excuſe which has not eſcaped her; ſhe reproaches you leſs for abuſing her confidence, than ſhe does her own weakneſs for putting it in your power. She has ſuch an eſteem for you, as to believe that no other man in your place would have made a better reſiſtance; and even attributes your faults to virtue. She now, ſhe ſays, perceives the vanity of that boaſted probity which does not ſecure a perſon in love, who is in other reſpects a worthy man, from the guilt of corrupting a virtuous girl, and without ſcruple diſhonouring a whole family, to indulge a momentary madneſs.

But to what purpoſe do we recur to what is paſt? our preſent buſineſs is to conceal, under an everlaſting vail, this odious myſtery to efface, if poſſible, the leaſt veſtige of it, and to ſecond

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the goodneſs of heaven, which has left no viſible proof of your folly The ſecret is confined to ſix ſafe perſons. The repoſe of all you have loved, the life of a mother reduced to deſpair, the honour of a reſpectable family, your own virtue, all theſe ſtill depend on you, all theſe point out your duty you may repair the evil you have done, you may render yourſelf worthy of Julia, and juſtify her fault by renouncing your pretenſions If I am not deceived in my opinion of your heart, nothing but the greatneſs of ſuch a ſacrifice can be equal to the love that renders it neceſſary Relying on the ſublimity of your ſentiments, I have promiſed, in your name, every thing you ought to perform. dare to undeceive me, if I have preſumed too much on your merit, or be now what you ought to be. It is neceſſary to ſacrifice either your miſtreſs or your love, and to ſhew yourſelf the moſt abject, or the moſt virtuous of mankind.

This unfortunate mother intented to write to you. ſhe even began the painful taſk. Oh! what ſtabs would her bitter complaints have given you! how would her affecting reproaches have wounded your heart, and her humble intreaties penetrated you with ſhame! I have torn in pieces this diſtreſsful letter, which you would never have been able to ſupport. I could not endure the prepoſterous ſight of a mother humbling herſelf before the ſeducer of her child you are worthy, at leaſt, that we ſhould not uſe means that would rend a heart of adamant, and drive to the extremes of deſpair a man of uncommon ſenſibility.

If this were the firſt effort love had demand-

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ed from you, I might doubt of the ſucceſs, and heſitate as to the degree of eſteem you deſerve but the ſacrifice you have made to the honour of Julia, by quitting this country, is a pledge of that you are going to make to her repoſe, by putting a ſtop to a uſeleſs correſpondence. The firſt efforts of virtue are always the moſt painful, and you will loſe the advantage of that which has coſt you ſo dear, by obſtinately maintaining a vain correſpondence, attended with ſuch danger to her you love, without the leaſt advantage to either of you; and which can only ſerve to prolong the torments of both. No longer doubt it, it is become abſolutely neceſſary that this Julia, who was ſo dear to you, ſhould be forgotten by the man ſhe loved ſo well In vain you diſſemble your misfortunes, ſhe was loſt to you at the moment you left her, or, rather, heaven diſpoſed of her, before ſhe gave herſelf to you, for her father had promiſed her to another before his return, and you too well know that the promiſe of that inexorable man is irrevocable. In what manner ſoever you regulate your conduct, your deſires are oppoſed by an inevitable fate, and you can never poſſeſs her The only choice that remains to you, is either to plunge her into an abyſs of misfortunes and reproach, or to honour what you have adored, and reſtore to her, inſtead of the happineſs ſhe has loſt, at leaſt the prudence, peace, and ſafety of which ſhe has been deprived by her fatal connection with you.

How would you be afflicted, how would you be ſtung with remorſe, could you contemplate the real ſtate of my unhappy friend, and the abaſe-

abaſement to which ſhe is reduced by remorſe and ſhame? How is her luſtre tarniſhed, how languid all her graceſulneſs? how are all her noble and engaging ſentiments unhappily abſorbed in this one paſſion? her friendſhip itſelf is cooled. ſcarcely does ſhe partake of the pleaſure I feel when we meet: her ſick heart is only ſenſible of grief and love. Alas! what is become of that fondneſs and ſenſibility, of that delicacy of taſte, of that tender intereſt in the pains and pleaſures of others? She is ſtill, I confeſs, mild, generous, compaſſionate the amiable habit of doing well cannot be effaced, but it is only a blind habit, a taſte without reflection. Her actions are the ſame, but they are not performed with the ſame zeal, thoſe ſublime ſentiments are weakened, that divine flame is extinguiſhed, this angel is now no more than woman Oh, what a noble mind have you ſeduced from virtue!

LETTER XCV.

To the Baroneſs d'ETANGE.

PENETRATED with ſorrow, which ought to be laſting as my life, I throw myſelf at your feet, not to ſhew a repentance that is out of my power, but to expiate an involuntary crime, by renouncing all that could render life a bleſſing. As no human paſſion ever equalled that inſpired by your angelic daughter, never was there a ſacrifice equal to that I am going to make to the moſt reſpectable of mothers but Julia has, too well

well taught me how to ſacrifice happineſs to duty, ſhe has too courageouſly ſet me the example, for me, at leaſt, in one inſtance, not to imitate her Were my blood capable of removing your diſtreſs, I would ſhed it in ſilence, and complain of being able to give you only ſo feeble a proof of my affection; but to break the moſt ſweet, the moſt pure, the moſt ſacred bond that ever united two hearts, is, alas! an effort which the whole univerſe could not oblige me to make, and which you alone could obtain.

Yes, I promiſe to live far from her, as long as you require it, I will abſtain from ſeeing her, from writing to her this I ſwear by your precious life, ſo neceſſary to the preſervation of her's I ſubmit, not without horror, but without murmuring, to whatever you condeſcend to enjoin her and me. I will even add, that her happineſs is capable of alleviating my miſery, and that I ſhall die contented, if you give her a huſband worthy of her. Oh, let him be found! and let him dare to tell me that his paſſion for Julia is greater than mine! In vain may he have every thing that I want, if he has not my heart, he has nothing for Julia. But I have only this honeſt and tender heart Alas! I have nothing more Love, which levels all, exalts not the perſon, it elevates only the ſentiments Oh, had I dared to liſten to mine for you, how often, in addreſſing you, would my lips have pronounced the tender name of mother?

Deign to confide in oaths which ſhall not be vain, and in a man who is not a deceiver If I ever diſhonour your eſteem, I muſt firſt diſhonour myſelf My unexperienced heart knew

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not the danger, till it was too late to fly I had not then learned of your daughter the cruel art ſhe has ſince taught me, of conquering love with its own weapons Baniſh your fears, I conjure you Is there a perſon in the world to whom her repoſe, her felicity, her honour, is more dear than it is to me? no, my word and my heart are ſecurities for the engagement into which I now enter, as well in the name of my lovely friend, as in my own Aſſure yourſelf that no indiſcreet word ſhall ever paſs my lips, and that I will breathe my laſt ſigh without divulging the cauſe of my death. Calm therefore that affliction which conſumes you, and which adds infinitely to mine, dry up the tears that pierce my very ſoul, try to recover your health, reſtore to the moſt affectionate daughter that ever exiſted, the happineſs ſhe has renounced for you, be happy, live, that ſhe may value life, for, notwithſtanding our misfortunes, to be the mother of Julia is ſtill ſufficient cauſe for happineſs.

LETTER XCVI.

To Mrs ORBE

With the preceding Letter incloſed

THERE, cruel friend! is my anſwer. When you read it, if you know my heart, you will burſt into tears, unleſs yours has loſt its ſenſibility, but no longer overwhelm me with that mercileſs eſteem which I ſo dearly pur-

chaſe, and which ſerves but to increaſe my torment

Has your barbarous hand then dared to break the gentle union formed under your eye, even almoſt from infancy, and which your friendſhip ſeemed to ſhare with ſo much pleaſure! I am now as wretched as you would have me, or as it is poſſible to be. Do you conceive all the evil you have done? are you ſenſible that you have torn me from my ſoul? that what I have loſt is beyond redemption, and above recompenſe? and that it is better to die an hundred times, than not to live for each other? Why do you urge the happineſs of Julia? can ſhe be happy while her heart is not content? Why do you mention the danger of her mother? ah! what is the life of a mother; of mine, of yours, even of her's; what is the exiſtence of the whole world, to the delightful ſenſation by which we were united? O ſenſeleſs and ſavage virtue! I obey thy unmeaning voice, I abhor thee, while I ſacrifice all to thy dictates How unavailing are thy conſolations againſt the deſtreſsful agonies of the ſoul? Go, thou ſullen idol of the unhappy, thou only ſerveſt to augment their miſery, by depriving them of the reſources which fortune offers Yet I obey, yes, cruel friend, I obey I will become, if poſſible, as inſenſible and ſavage as yourſelf I will forget every thing upon earth that was dear to me I will no longer hear or pronounce Julia's name, or yours I will no more recal their unſupportable remembrance An inflexible vexation and rage ſhall preſerve me from ſuch misfortunes A ſteady obſtinacy ſhall ſupply the place of courage I have paid

too

too dearly for my ſenſibility, it were better even to renounce humanity

LETTER XCVII.

From Mrs ORBE.

THE letter you have written me is indeed extremely pathetic, but there is ſo much love and virtue in your conduct, that it effaces the bitterneſs of your complaints. you are ſo generous, that I have not the courage to quarrel with you; for whatever extravagances we may commit, if we are ſtill capable of ſacrificing all that is dear to us, we deſerve praiſe rather than reproach, therefore, notwithſtanding your abuſe, you never was ſo dear to me, as ſince you have made me ſo fully ſenſible of your worth.

Return thanks to that virtue you believe you hate, and which does more for you than even your love. There is not one of us, not even my aunt, whom you have not gained by a ſacrifice, the value of which ſhe well knows She could not read your letter without a flow of tenderneſs ſhe had even the weakneſs to ſhew it to her daughter, but poor Julia's endeavours, while ſhe read it, to ſtifle her ſighs and tears, quite overcame her, and ſhe fainted away

This tender mother, whom your letters had already greatly affected, begins to perceive from every circumſtance, that your hearts are of a ſuperior mould, and that they are diſtinguiſhed by a natural ſympathy, which neither time nor human efforts will ever be able to efface. She

who ſtands in ſuch need of conſolation, would herſelf freely conſole her daughter, if prudence did not reſtrain her, and I ſee her too ready to become her confident, to fear that ſhe can be angry with me. Yeſterday I heard her ſay, even before Julia, perhaps a little indiſcreetly, "Ah! if it only depended on me!"——and though ſhe ſtopt ſhort, and ſaid no more, I perceived, by a kiſs which Julia impreſſed on her hand, that ſhe too well underſtood her meaning I am even certain that ſhe was ſeveral times inclined to ſpeak to her inflexible huſband, but whether the danger of expoſing her daughter to the fury of an enraged father, or whether it was fear for herſelf, her timidity has hitherto kept her ſilent, and her illneſs increaſes ſo faſt, that I am afraid ſhe will never be able to execute her half formed reſolution.

However, notwithſtanding the faults of which you are the cauſe, that integrity of heart, viſible in your mutual affection, has given her ſuch an opinion of you, that ſhe confides in the promiſe you have both made of diſcontinuing your correſpondence, and has not taken any precaution to have her daughter more cloſely watched. indeed, if Julia makes an ill return to her confidence, ſhe will no longer be worthy of her affection You would both deſerve the ſevereſt treatment, if you were capable of deceiving the beſt of mothers, and of abuſing the eſteem ſhe has for you

I ſhall not endeavour to revive in your mind the hopes which I myſelf do not entertain, but I would ſhew you, that the moſt honeſt is alſo the wiſeſt part, and that if you have any reſource left,

left, it is in the ſacrifice which reaſon and honour lay you under. Mother, relations, friends, are now all for you, except the father, who will by this method be gained over, if any thing can do it Whatever imprecations you may utter in the moment of deſpair, you have a hundred times proved to us, that there is no path more ſure of leading to happineſs than that of virtue Therefore reſume your courage, and be a man! be again yourſelf. If I am at all acquainted with your heart, the moſt cruel manner of loſing Julia, would be by rendering yourſelf unworthy of her.

LETTER XCVIII.

From JULIA.

SHE is no more! my eyes have ſeen her's cloſed for ever, my lips have received her laſt ſigh, my name was the laſt word ſhe pronounced, her laſt look was fixed on me No, it was not life ſhe ſeemed to quit, too little had I known how to render that valuable! From me alone ſhe was torn. She ſaw me without a guide, and void of hope, overwhelmed by my misfortunes and my crime to her, death was nothing, ſhe grieved only to leave her daughter in ſuch a ſtate of miſery Alas! ſhe had but too much reaſon What had ſhe to regret on earth? what could there be here below, in her eye, worth the immortal reward of patience and of virtue reſerved for her in a better world? what had ſhe to do on earth, but to weep for my diſgrace?

grace? Oh! moſt incomparable woman! thou now dwelleſt in the abode of glory and felicity! thou liveſt, whilſt I, given up to repentance and deſpair, deprived for ever of thy care, thy counſel, thy ſweet careſſes, am dead to happineſs, to peace, to innocence! Nothing do I feel but the loſs of thee, nothing do I behold but my own reproach my life is only pain and grief. Oh my dear, my tender mother! alas, I am more dead than thou art!

Good God! to whom do I ſhed theſe tears, and vent theſe ſighs? The cruel man who cauſed them, I make my confident! With him, who has rendered my life unhappy, I dare to deplore my unhappineſs! Yes, yes, barbarous as you are, ſhare the torments you have made me ſuffer. You, for whom I have plunged the dagger into a mother's boſom, tremble at the misfortunes you have occaſioned, and ſhudder with me at the horrid act you have committed! To what eyes dare I preſume to appear as deſpicable as I really am? before whom ſhall I degrade myſelf to the bent of my remorſe? to whom, but to the accomplice of my crime, can I ſufficiently make it known? It is my inſupportable puniſhment, to have no accuſer but my own heart, and to ſee attributed to the goodneſs of my diſpoſition the impure tears that flow from a bitter repentance. I ſaw, I trembling ſaw, the poiſonous ſorrow put a period to the life of my unhappy mother. In vain did her pity for me prevent her confeſſing it, in vain ſhe affected to attribute the progreſs of her illneſs to the cauſe by which it was produced, in vain was my couſin induced to talk in the ſame

ſtream.

ſtrain. Nothing could deceive a heart torn with regret, and, to my laſting torment, I ſhall carry to my tomb the frightful idea of having ſhortened her life, to whom I am indebted for my own

O thou, whom heaven in its anger raiſed up to render me guilty and unhappy, for the laſt time receive into thy boſom the tears thou haſt occaſioned! I come not, as formerly, to ſhare with thee the grief that ought to be mutual. Theſe are the ſighs of a laſt adieu, which eſcape from me in ſpite of myſelf It is done the empire of love is ſubdued in a ſoul condemned wholly to deſpair. I will conſecrate the reſt of my days to lamentation for the beſt of mothers. To her I will ſacrifice that paſſion which was the cauſe of her death, happy ſhall I be, if the painful conqueſt be ſufficient to expiate my guilt! Oh, if her immortal mind penetrates into the bottom of my heart, ſhe will know that the ſacrifice I make is not entirely unworthy of her! Share with me then an effort which you have rendered neceſſary If you retain any reſpect for the memory of an union once ſo dear and fatal, by that I conjure you to fly from me for ever, no more to write to me, no more to aggravate my remorſe, but ſuffer me to forget, if poſſible, our former connection. May my eyes never behold you more! may I never more hear your name pronounced! may the remembrance of you never more agitate my mind! I dare ſtill intreat, in the name of that love which ought never to have exiſted, that to ſo many cauſes of grief you add not that of ſeeing my laſt requeſt deſpiſed. Adieu then for the laſt time, dear

and

and only——Ah, fool that I am——adieu for ever!

LETTER XCIX.

To Mrs ORBE

AT laſt the vail is rent, the long illuſion is vaniſhed, all my flattering hopes are extinguiſhed, nothing is left to feed the eternal flame, but a bitter, yet pleaſing remembrance, which ſupports my life, and nouriſhes my torments with the vain recollection of a happineſs that is now no more

Is it then true, that I have taſted ſupreme felicity? Am I the ſame being that was once ſo happy? Could any one be ſuſceptible of ſuch torments, who was not doomed to eternal miſery? Can he who has enjoyed the bleſſings I have loſt, be deprived of them, and ſtill exiſt? and can ſuch contrary ſenſations affect the ſame mind? O ye glorious and happy days, ſurely ye were immortal! ye were too celeſtial ever to periſh! your whole duration was one continued ecſtacy, by which ye were converged like eternity into a ſingle point. I knew neither of paſt nor future, and I taſted at once the delights of a thouſand ages Alas! ye are vaniſhed like a ſhadow! that eternity of happineſs was but an inſtant of my life Time now returnes his tardy pace, and ſlowly meaſures the ſad remains of my exiſtence

To render my diſtreſs ſtill more inſupportable, my increaſing affliction is cruelly aggravated by the

the loſs of all that was dear to me. It is poſſible, Madam, that you have ſtill ſome regard for me but you are buſied by other cares, and employed in other duties These my complaints, to which you once liſtened with concern, are now indiſcreet. Julia! Julia herſelf diſcourages and abandons me. Gloomy remorſe has baniſhed love for ever All is changed with reſpect to me, except the ſtedfaſtneſs of my own heart, which ſerves but to render my fate ſtill more dreadful

But, to what purpoſe is it to ſay what I am, and what I ought to be? Julia ſuffers! is it a time to think of myſelf? her ſorrow renders mine more bitter Yes, I had rather ſhe would ceaſe to love me, and that ſhe were happy—Ceaſe to love me!—can ſhe hope it?—never, never! She has indeed forbid me to ſee or write to her Alas! ſhe removes the comforter, but never can the torment! Should the loſs of a tender mother deprive her of a ſtill more tender friend? does ſhe think to alleviate her griefs by multiplying her misfortunes? O love! can nature be revenged only at thy expence?

No, no, in vain ſhe pretends to forget me Can her tender heart ſeparate itſelf from mine? do I not retain it in ſpite of herſelf? are ſenſations like thoſe we have experienced, to be forgotten, and can they be remembered without being again felt? Triumphant love was the bane of her ſociety, and love conquered will only render her the more deſerving of pity Her days will paſs in ſorrow, tormented at once by vain regret and vain deſires, without ever being able

able to fulfil the obligations either of love or virtue.

Imagine not, however, that in complaining of her errors, I ceaſe to reſpect them. After ſo many ſacrifices, it is too late for me to begin to diſobey Since ſhe commands, it is ſufficient, ſhe ſhall hear of me no more. Say, is my fate now ſufficiently dreadful? Yet to renounce my Julia, is not the chief cauſe of my deſpair the keeneſt pangs I feel are for her misfortunes, which render me infinitely more miſerable than do my own. You, whom ſhe loves above all the world, and who, next to me, are beſt acquainted with her worth, you, my amiable friend, are the only bleſſing ſhe has left a bleſſing ſo precious, as to render the loſs of all the reſt ſupportable Be you her recompenſe for the comforts of which ſhe is deprived, and for thoſe alſo which ſhe rejects. let a ſacred friendſhip ſupply at once the tenderneſs of a parent and a lover, by adminiſtring every conſolation that may contribute to her happineſs O let her be happy, if ſhe can be ſo, how great ſoever the purchaſe! may ſhe ſoon recover the peace of mind of which I, alas! have robbed her! I ſhall then be leſs ſenſible of the torment to which I am condemned Since in my own eyes I am nothing, ſince it is my fate to paſs my life in dying for her, let her regard me as already dead, I am ſatisfied, if this idea will add to her tranquility Heaven grant, that by your kindneſs ſhe may be reſtored to her former excellence, and her former happineſs

Unhappy daughter! alas, thy mother is no more! this is a loſs that cannot be repaired, and

and for which, ſo long as ſhe reproaches herſelf, ſhe can never be conſoled. Her troubled conſcience requires of her this dear and tender mother; and thus the moſt dreadful remorſe is added to her affliction. O Julia! oughteſt thou to feel theſe terrible ſenſations? thou, who wert a witneſs of the ſickneſs and of the laſt moments of that unfortunate parent! I intreat, I conjure you to tell me, what I ought to believe. If I am guilty, tear my heart in pieces. If our crimes brought her down to the grave, we are two monſters unworthy of exiſtence, and it were a double crime to think of ſo fatal an union. O, it were even a crime to live! But, no, I am ſatisfied ſo pure a flame could never produce ſuch baleful effects. Surely the ſentiments of love are too noble. Can heaven be unjuſt? and could ſhe, who ſacrificed her happineſs to the author of her life, ever deſerve to be the cauſe of her death?

LETTER C.

The ANSWER.

HOW can I ceaſe to love you, when my eſteem for you increaſes every day? how can I ſtifle my affection, whilſt you are growing every day more worthy of it? No, my dear, my excellent friend, what we were to each other in early life, we ſhall continue to be for ever, and if our mutual attachment no longer increaſes, it is becauſe it cannot be increaſed. All the difference is, that I then loved you as

my brother, and that now I love you as my ſon; for though we are both younger than you, and were even your ſcholars, I now in ſome meaſure conſider you as ours In teaching us to think, you have learnt of us ſenſibility; and whatever your Engliſh philoſopher may ſay, this education is more valuable than the other if it is reaſon that conſtitutes the man, it is ſenſibility that conducts him.

Would you know why I have changed my conduct towards you? it is not, believe me, becauſe my heart is not ſtill the ſame, but becauſe your ſituation is changed I favoured your paſſion, while there remained one ray of hope; but ſince, by obſtinately aſpiring to Julia, you can only make her unhappy, it would be injuring you to flatter your expectations I had even rather increaſe your diſcontent, and thus render you leſs deſerving of my compaſſion When the happineſs of both becomes impoſſible, all that is left for a hopeleſs lover, is to ſacrifice his own to that of the object beloved

This, my generous friend, you have performed in the moſt painful ſacrifice that ever was made, but, by renouncing Julia, you will purchaſe her repoſe, though at the expence of your own.

I dare ſcarce repeat to you the ideas that occur to me on this ſubject, but they are fraught with conſolation, and that emboldens me. In the firſt place, I believe, that true love, as well as virtue, has this advantage, that it is rewarded by every ſacrifice we make to it, and that we in ſome meaſure enjoy the privations we impoſe on ourſelves, in the very idea of what they coſt

us,

us, and of the motives by which we were induced You will be ſenſible that your love for Julia was in proportion to her merit, and that will increaſe your happineſs The exquiſite ſelf-love, which knows how to reap advantage from painful virtue, will mingle its charm with that of love. You will ſay to yourſelf, I know how to love, with a pleaſure more durable and more delicate than even poſſeſſion itſelf would have afforded. The latter wears out the paſſion by conſtant enjoyment; but the other laſts for ever, and you will ſtill enjoy it, even when you love no more.

Beſides, if what Julia and you have ſo often told me be true, that love is the moſt delightful ſenſation that can enter into the human heart, every thing that prolongs and fixes it, even at the expence of a thouſand vexations, is ſtill a bleſſing. If love is a deſire, that is increaſed by obſtacles, as you ſtill ſay, it ought never to be ſatisfied; it is better to preſerve it at any rate, than that it ſhould be extinguiſhed in pleaſure Your paſſion, I confeſs, has ſtood the proof of poſſeſſion, of time, of abſence, and of dangers of every kind, it has conquered every obſtacle, except the moſt powerful of all, that of having nothing more to conquer, and of feeding only on itſelf. The world has never ſeen the paſſion ſtand this proof, what right have you then to hope, that yours would have ſtood the teſt? Time might have joined to the diſguſt of a long poſſeſſion, the progreſs of age and the decline of beauty, whereas, by your ſeparation, it ſeems fixed in your favour you will be always to each other in the bloom of your years, you will in-

ceſſantly ſee her, as ſhe was when you beheld her at parting, and your hearts, united even to the grave, will prolong, by a charming illuſion, your youth and your love.

If you had never been happy, an unſurmountable inquietude might have tormented you, your heart might have panted after a felicity of which it was not unworthy, your warm imagination would have inceſſantly required that which you might not have obtained But love has no delights which you have not taſted; and, in your own ſtyle, you have exhauſted in one year the pleaſures of a whole life. Remember the paſſionate letter you wrote after a certain raſh interview I read it with an emotion I had never before experienced, it had no traces of the permanent ſtate of a truly tender heart, but was filled with the laſt delirium of a mind inflamed with paſſion, and intoxicated with pleaſure. You yourſelf may judge that ſuch tranſports are not to be twice experienced in this life, and that death ought immediately to ſucceed. This, my friend, was the ſummit of all, and whatever love or fortune might have done for you, your paſſion and your felicity muſt have declined That inſtant was alſo the beginning of your diſgrace, and Julia was taken from you, at the moment when ſhe could inſpire no new ſenſations, as if fate intended to ſecure your paſſion from being exhauſted, and to leave, in the remembrance of your paſt pleaſures, a pleaſure more ſweet than all thoſe you could now have enjoyed

Comfort yourſelf then with the loſs of a bleſſing that would certainly have eſcaped you, and would

would beſides have deprived you of that you now poſſeſs. Happineſs and love would have vaniſhed at once; you have at leaſt preſerved that paſſion, and we are not without pleaſure while we continue to love. The idea of extinguiſhed love is more terrifying to a tender heart, than that of an unhappy flame; and to feel a diſguſt for what we poſſeſs, is an hundred times worſe than a regret for what is loſt

If the ſelf-reproaches vented by my afflicted couſin, on the death of her mother, were well founded, the cruel remembrance would, I confeſs, poiſon that of your love, which ought for ever to be deſtroyed by ſo fatal an idea but give no credit to her grief, it deceives her, or rather the cauſe to which ſhe would aſcribe her ſorrow, is only a pretence to juſtify its exceſs. Her tender mind is always in fear that her affliction is not ſufficiently ſevere, and ſhe feels a kind of pleaſure in adding bitterneſs to her diſtreſs. but ſhe certainly impoſes on herſelf, ſhe cannot be ſincere.

Ah! if ſhe really believed ſhe had ſhortened her mother's life, do you think ſhe could ſupport the dreadful remorſe with which ſhe would be ſeized? No, no, my friend, ſhe would not then weep, ſhe would have ſunk with her into the grave. The baroneſs d'Etange's diſeaſe is well known; it was a dropſy of the pericardium, which was incurable, and her life was deſpaired of, even before ſhe had diſcovered your correſpondence. I own it afflicted her much, but ſhe had great conſolation. How comfortable was it to that tender mother to ſee, while ſhe lamented the fault of her daughter, by how m-

ny virtues it was counterbalanced, and to be forced to admire the dignity of her ſoul, while ſhe lamented the weakneſs of nature? how pleaſing to perceive with what affection ſhe loved her? ſuch indefatigable zeal! ſuch continual ſolicitude! ſuch grief at having offended her! what regret, what tears, what affecting careſſes, what unwearied ſenſibility! In the eyes of the daughter were viſible all the mother's ſufferings, it was ſhe who ſerved her in the day, and watched her by night, it was from her hand that ſhe received every aſſiſtance you would have thought her ſome other Julia, for her natural delicacy diſappeared, ſhe was ſtrong and robuſt, the moſt painful ſervices cauſed no fatigue, and the intrepidity of her ſoul ſeemed to have created her a new body. She did every thing, yet appeared to be unemployed, ſhe was every-where, and yet rarely left her; ſhe was perpetually on her knees by the bed, with her lips preſſed to her mother's hand, bewailing her illneſs and her own misfortunes, and confounding theſe two ſenſations in order to increaſe her affliction I never ſaw any perſon enter my aunt's chamber, during the laſt days, without being moved even to tears at this moſt affecting ſpectacle, to behold two hearts more cloſely uniting, at the very moment when they were to be torn aſunder It was viſible that their only cauſe of anguiſh was their ſeparation; and that to live or die would have been indifferent to either, could they have remained or departed together.

Far from adopting Julia's gloomy ideas, aſſure yourſelf that every thing that could be hoped for from human aſſiſtance and conſolation, have on her

her part concurred to retard the progreſs of her mother's diſeaſe, and that her tenderneſs and care have undoubtedly preſerved her longer with us, than ſhe would otherwiſe have continued. My aunt herſelf has told me a hundred times, that her laſt days were the ſweeteſt of her life, and that the happineſs of her dauughter was the only thing wanting to complete her own

If grief muſt be ſuppoſed in any degree to have haſtened her diſſolution, it certainly ſprang from another ſource It is to her huſband it ought to be aſcribed Being naturally inconſtant, he laviſhed the fire of his youth on a thouſand objects infinitely leſs pleaſing than his virtuous wife, and when age brought him back to her, he treated her with that inflexible ſeverity with which faithleſs huſbands are accuſtomed to aggravate their faults My poor couſin has felt the effects of it. An high opinion of his nobility, and that roughneſs of diſpoſition which nothing can ever ſoften, have produced your misfortunes and her's. Her mother, who had always a regard for you, and who diſcovered Julia's love when it was too violent to be extinguiſhed, had long ſecretly bemoaned the misfortune of not being able to conquer either the inclinations of her daughter, or the obſtinacy of her huſband, and of being the firſt cauſe of an evil which ſhe could not remedy. When your letters unexpectedly fell into her hands, and ſhe found how far you had miſuſed her confidence, ſhe was afraid of loſing all by endeavouring to ſave all, and to hazard the life of her child in attempting to reſtore her honour She ſounded her huſband ſeveral times without

ſucceſs

ſucceſs She often reſolved to venture an entire confidence in him, and to ſhew him the full extent of his duty, but ſhe was always reſtrained by her timidity. She heſitated while it was in her power, and when ſhe would have told him, ſhe was no longer able to ſpeak, her ſtrength failed her, ſhe carried the fatal ſecret with her to the grave, and I know the auſtere diſpoſition of the man, without having the leaſt idea how far it may be tempered by natural affection, am ſatisfied, ſince Julia's life is in no danger

All this ſhe knows. But you will aſk, what I think of her apparent remorſe? in anſwer to which I muſt tell you, that love is more ingenuous than ſhe. Overcome with grief for the loſs of her mother, ſhe would willingly forget you; and, in ſpite of herſelf, Love diſturbs her conſcience in order to bring you to her memory. He chuſes that her tears ſhould be connected with the object of her paſſion, but ſhe not daring to employ her thoughts directly on you, he deceives her into it under the maſk of repentance thus he impoſes on her with ſo much art, that ſhe is willing to increaſe her woes rather than baniſh you from her thoughts Your heart may perhaps be ignorant of ſuch ſubterfuges, but they are not the leſs natural, for though your paſſion may be equal in degree, its nature is very different Yours is warm and violent, her's ſoft and tender, your ſenſations are breathed forth with vehemence, but her's retort upon herſelf, and pierce her very inmoſt ſoul. Love animates and ſupports your heart, whilſt her's is oppreſſed and dejected with its weight,

weight, all its ſprings are relaxed, her ſtrength is gone, her courage is extinguiſhed, and her virtue has loſt its power. Her heroic faculties are not however annihilated, but ſuſpended a momentary criſis may reſtore them to their full vigour, or totally deſtroy their exiſtence One ſtep farther in this gloomy path and ſhe is loſt, but if her incomparable ſoul ſhould recover itſelf, ſhe will be greater, more heroic, more virtuous than ever, and there will be no danger of a relapſe. Learn then in this perilous ſituation to revere the object of your love Any thing that ſhould come from you, though it were againſt yourſelf, would at this time infallibly prove mortal If you are determined to perſiſt, your triumph will be certain, but think not you will ever poſſeſs the ſelf-ſame Julia.

LETTER CI

From Lord B——.

I HAD ſome pretenſions to your friendſhip, you were become ſerviceable to me, and I was prepared to meet you But what are my pretenſions, my neceſſities, or my eagerneſs, to you? I am forgotten, you do not even deign to write to me. I am not ignorant of your ſolitude, nor a ſtranger to your ſecret deſign, you are weary of exiſtence. Die then, weak youth, yes die, thou daring, yet cowardly mortal, but in thy laſt moments, remember that thou haſt ſtung the ſoul of thy ſincere friend with the reflection of having ſerved an ungrateful man.

LET-

LETTER CII.

The ANSWER.

COME, my kind friend. I was determined to taſte no more pleaſure upon earth, but we will meet once more. You are wrong, it is as impoſſible that you ſhould meet with ingratitude, as that I ſhould ever be ungrateful.

BILLET.

From JULIA.

IT is time to renounce the errors of youth, and to abandon a deceitful hope. I can never be yours Reſtore to me that liberty of which my father chuſes to diſpoſe, or fill up the meaſure of my woes by a refuſal which will ruin me for ever, without producing any advantage to yourſelf

Julia Etange

LETTER CIII.

From the Baron d'ETANGE.

In which the preceding Billet was incloſed.

IF there remains in the mind of a ſeducer the leaſt ſentiment of honour or humanity, anſwer

ſwer the billet of an unhappy girl, whoſe heart you have corrupted, and who ſhould no longer exiſt, if I could ſuppoſe her to have carried the forgetfulneſs of herſelf any farther. I ſhould not indeed be much ſurpriſed if the ſame philoſophy which taught her to catch at the firſt man ſhe ſaw, ſhould alſo inſtruct her to diſobey her father. Think of this matter. I always chuſe to proceed with lenity and decency, when theſe methods are likely to ſucceed, but becauſe I act thus with you, you are not to ſuppoſe me ignorant in what manner a gentleman ſhould take revenge of thoſe beneath him.

LETTER CIV

The ANSWER

SPARE, Sir, thoſe vain menaces, and that unjuſt reproach, which can neither terrify nor humble me Between two perſons of the ſame age there can be no *ſeducer* but love, and you can have no right to vilify a man whom your daughter honoured with her eſteem

What conceſſions do you expect, and from what authority are they demanded? Is it to the author of all my misfortunes that I muſt ſacrifice my remaining glimpſe of hope! I will reſpect the father of Julia, but let him deign to be mine if he expects obedience No, Sir, what opinion ſoever you may entertain of your proceedings, they will not oblige me, for your ſake, to relinquiſh ſuch valuable and juſt pretenſions As you are the ſole cauſe of my miſery,

I owe

I owe you nothing but hatred, your pretenſions are without foundation. But Julia commands her I ſhall never diſobey; therefore you have my conſent Another may poſſeſs her, but I ſhall be more worthy.

If your daughter had deigned to conſult me concerning the limits of your authority, doubt not but I would have taught her to diſregard your unjuſt pretenſions How deſpotic ſoever may be the empire you aſſume, my rights are infinitely more ſacred. The chain by which we are united marks the extent of paternal dominion, even in the eye of human tribunals, and whilſt you appeal to the right of nature, you yourſelf are trampling upon its laws

Ceaſe to alledge that delicate phantom honour, which you ſeem ſo determined to vindicate, for here again you are the ſole offender Reſpect Julia's choice, and your honour is ſecure, for I honour you in my heart, regardleſs of your inſults. Notwithſtanding all your gothic maxims, one honeſt man was never diſhonoured by his alliance with another If my preſumption offends you, attempt my life, againſt you I ſhall never defend it. As to the reſt, I am little anxious to know in what conſiſts the honour of a gentleman, but with regard to that of an honeſt man, I own it concerns me, and therefore I ſhall defend and preſerve it pure and ſpotleſs to the end of my life

Go, inhuman father, and meditate the deſtruction of your only child, whilſt ſhe, full of duty and affection, ſtands ready to yield her happineſs a victim to prejudice and opinion but be aſſured your own remorſe will one day

ſeverely

ſeverely revenge my injuries, and you will then perceive, when it is too late, that your blind and unnatural hatred was no more fatal to me than to yourſelf. That I ſhall be wretched, is moſt certain but if ever the juſt feelings of nature ſhould emerge from the bottom of your heart, how infinitely greater will be your unhappineſs in having ſacrificed the only daughter of your boſom to a mere phantom a daughter who has no equal in beauty, merit, or virtue, and on whom indulgent heaven has beſtowed every bleſſing except a kind father.

BILLET.

Incloſed in the foregoing.

I RESTORE to Julia Etange the power to diſpoſe of herſelf, and to give her hand without conſulting her heart

S G

LETTER CV.

From JULIA

I INTENDED giving you a deſcription of the ſcene which produced the billet you have received, but my father took his meaſures ſo artfully, that it ended only the inſtant before the poſt went out His letter as certainly ſaved the mail as this will be too late, ſo that your reſo-

lution will be taken, and your anſwer diſpatched, before it can poſſibly reach you, therefore, all detail would now be uſeleſs. I have done my duty; you will do yours but fate will overwhelm us, and we are betrayed by honour. We are divided for ever! and to increaſe my horror, I am going to be forced into the arms of——O heavens! it was once in my power to live in thine. Juſt God!—we muſt tremble and be ſilent

The pen falls from my hand I have been of late much indiſpoſed This morning's affair has agitated me prodigiouſly——Oh, my head, my poor heart? I feel, I feel, I ſhall faint—— Will heaven have no mercy on my ſufferings? ——I can no longer ſupport myſelf——I muſt retire to my bed, and will conſole myſelf in the hope of riſing no more Adieu, my only love! adieu, for the laſt time, my dear, my tender friend! Ah! I live no longer for thee! have I not then already ceaſed to live?

LETTER CVI.

From JULIA *to Mrs* ORBE.

IS it then true, my dear, my cruel friend, that you have called me back to life and wretchedneſs? I ſaw the happy inſtant when I was going to be again united to the tendereſt of mothers; but your inhuman kindneſs has condemned me to bemoan her yet longer when my deſire to follow her had almoſt ſnatched me from this earth, my unwillingneſs to leave you behind held

held me faſt. If I am at all reconciled to life, it is from the comfort of not having entirely eſcaped the hand of death Thank heaven! that beauty is no more for which my heart has paid ſo dearly. The diſtemper from which I am recovered has happily deprived me of it This fortunate loſs, I hope, will abate the groſs ardour of a man ſo indelicate as to dare to marry me without my conſent Not finding any longer the only thing which he admired, he will ſurely be little anxious about the reſt. Without breach of promiſe to my father, without injuring that friend whoſe life is in his power, I ſhall be able to repulſe this importunate wretch. my lips will be ſilent, but my looks will ſpeak for me. His diſguſt will defend me againſt his tyranny, and he will find me too diſagreeable to dare to make me unhappy

Ah, my dear couſin! you know a conſtant tender heart that would not be ſo repulſed His paſſion was not confined to outward form or charms of perſon, it was me that he loved, and not my face, we were united in every part of our being, and ſo long as Julia had remained, her beauty might have fled, but love would for ever have continued And yet he could conſent ——ungrateful youth!——yet it was but juſt, ſince I could aſk it Who would wiſh to retain by promiſe thoſe who could withdraw their heart? and did I attempt to withdraw mine? ——have I done it?——O heavens! why muſt every thing conſpire to remind me of times that are no more, and to increaſe a flame which ought to be extinguiſhed? In vain do I endeavour to tear the dear image from my heart it is

too firmly attached; that heart itſelf would firſt be torn in pieces, and all my endeavours only ſerve to engrave it deeper there

May I venture to tell you a viſion of my delirium during my fever, which has continued to torment me ever ſince my recovery? Yes, know and pity the diſtraction of your unhappy friend, that you may thank heaven for preſerving your heart from the horrid paſſion by which it is oc[illegible]d. During the moſt violent moment of my phrenzy, when my fever was at the height, I thought I beheld the unhappy youth kneeling by my bed-ſide not ſuch as when he charmed my ſenſes during the ſhort period of my felicity, but pale, wild, and loſt in deſpair. He took my hand, not diſguſted with its appearance, and with fear of the terrible infection, eagerly preſſed it, and bathed it with his tears. At the [illegible]ction, I felt that pleaſing emotion which his unexpected appearance uſed formerly to occaſion. I endeavoured to dart towards him, but was reſtrained. You tore him from me, and what affected me moſt was his ſighs and groans, which ſeemed to increaſe as he went farther from me

It is impoſſible to deſcribe the effect of this ſtrange dream My fever was long and violent, I continued many days inſenſible, I have ſeen him often in my phrenzy, but none of my dreams have left half the impreſſion on my memory which this laſt did it is impoſſible to drive it from my imagination. Methinks I ſee him every moment in that attitude. His air, his dreſs, his manner, his ſorrowful and tender look, are continually before my eyes. His lips

ſeem

ſeem ſtill to preſs my hand, I feel it wet with his tears. His plaintive voice melts my heart, now I behold him dragged far from me, whilſt I endeavour in vain to hold him faſt In ſhort, the whole imaginary ſcene appears in my mind as real as if it had actually paſſed.

I heſitated long before I could reſolve to tell you this Shame hindered me from diſcovering it when we were together, but my agitation, far from ſubſiding, grows every day ſtronger, and I am able no longer to conceal my folly Would that I were entirely a fool! why ſhould I wiſh to preſerve the remains of that reaſon which ſerves only to torment me.

But to return to my dream. Rally me, my dear friend, if you will, for my ſimplicity, but ſurely there is ſomething myſterious in this viſion, which diſtinguiſhes it from common phrenzy. Can it be a preſage of his death? or is he already dead? and was it thus that heaven deigned for once to be my guide, and invite me to follow him whom I was ordained to love? Alas! a ſummons to the grave would to me be the beſt of bleſſings.

In vain do I recal to my aid thoſe empty maxims of philoſophy which amuſe only thoſe who have no feelings: they impoſe on me no longer, and I cannot help deſpiſing them I believe that ſpirits are inviſible, but is it impoſſible that, between two lovers ſo cloſely united, there ſhould be an immediate communication, independent of the body and the ſenſes? may not their mutual impreſſions be tranſmitted through the brain? ——Poor Julia! what extravagances are theſe! How credulous do our paſſions render us!

us! and how difficult it is for a heart ſeverely affected to relinquiſh its errors, even after it perceives them.

LETTER CVII.

The ANSWER.

AH, unfortunate and tender girl! have you been born only to ſuffer? I try in vain to keep you from ſorrow; but you ſeem to court it, and your evil genius is more powerful than all my endeavours Do not however add chimerical apprehenſions to ſo many real cauſes of inquietude: and ſince my caution has been more prejudicial than ſerviceable to you, let me free you from a miſtake which aggravates your miſery, perhaps the melancholy truth will be leſs tormenting. Know then that your dream was not a dream, that it was not the phantom of your friend which you beheld, but his real perſon, and that the affecting ſcene, which is ever preſent to your imagination, did actually paſs in your room on the day after your diſorder was at the criſis.

On the preceding day I left you very late, and Mr Orbe, who would take me from you that night, was ready to depart; when on a ſudden we perceived that unhappy wretch, whoſe condition is truly deplorable, enter haſtily, and throw himſelf at our feet He took poſt horſes immediately on the receipt of your laſt letter. By travelling day and night he performed the journey in three days, and never ſtopped till the laſt ſtage, where he waited in order to enter the town

town under favour of the night. I am aſhamed to confeſs, that I was leſs eager than Mr Orbe to embrace him: for without knowing the intent of his journey, I foreſaw the conſequence. The bitter recollection of former times, your danger and his, his manifeſt diſcompoſure of mind, all contributed to check ſo agreeable a ſurpriſe, and I was too powerfully affected to ſalute him with eagerneſs. I nevertheleſs embraced him with a heart-felt emotion in which he ſympathiſed, and which reciprocally diſplayed itſelf in a kind of ſilent grief, more eloquent than tears and lamentations. The firſt words he uttered were ——"How does ſhe? O, how is my Julia? "am I to live or die?" I concluded from thence, that he was informed of your illneſs; and imagining that he was likewiſe acquainted with the nature of it, I ſpoke without any other precaution than that of extenuating the danger. When he underſtood that it was the ſmall pox, he made dreadful lamentation, and was taken ſuddenly ill. Fatigue and the want of ſleep, together with perturbation of mind, had ſo entirely overcome him, that it was ſome time before we could bring him to himſelf. He had ſcarce ſtrength to ſpeak, we therefore perſuaded him to go to reſt.

Nature being quite ſpent, he ſlept twelve hours ſucceſſively, but with ſo much agitation, that ſuch a ſleep muſt rather impair than recruit his ſtrength. The next day gave birth to new perplexity: he was abſolutely determined to ſee you. I repreſented to him the danger there was that his preſence might occaſion ſome fatal revolution in your diſtemper. He propoſed to wait

wait till there was no riſque, but his ſtay itſelf was a terrible riſque, of which I endeavoured to make him ſenſible. He rudely interrupted me "Ceaſe, (ſaid he with a tone of indignation,) your cruel eloquence it is too much to exert it for my ruin Do not hope to drive me from hence as you did when I was forced into exile. I would travel a hundred times from the farthest extremity of the world for a ſingle glance of my Julia but I ſwear (added he with vehemence,) by the Author of my being, that I will not ſtir till I have ſeen her We will try for once, whether I ſhall move you with compaſſion, or you make me guilty of perjury."

His reſolution was fixed. Mr Orbe was of opinion that we ſhould contrive ſome means to gratify him, that we might ſend him away before his return was diſcovered. for he was only known to one perſon in the houſe, of whoſe ſecrecy I was aſſured, and we called him by a feigned name before the family * I promiſed him that he ſhould ſee you the next night, upon condition that he ſtaid but a minute, that he did not utter a ſyllable, and that he departed the next morning before break of day To theſe conditions, I exacted his ſolemn promiſe; then I was eaſy, I left my huſband with him, and returned to you.

I found you much better, the eruption was quite complete; and the phyſician raiſed my courage, by giving me hopes. I laid my plan beforehand with Bab, and your fever, though a little abated, leaving you ſtill ſomewhat light-headed,

* We find afterwards, that this feigned name was St Preux

headed, I took that opportunity to diſmiſs every body, and ſend my huſband word to introduce his gueſt, concluding, that before the paroxyſm of your diſorder was over, you would be leſs likely to recollect him. We had all the diſficulty in the world to get rid of your diſconſolate father, who was determined to ſit up with you every night. At length I told him with ſome warmth, that he would ſpare nobody the trouble of watching, for that I was determined likewiſe to ſit up with you, and that he might be aſſured, though he was your father, his tenderneſs for you was not greater than mine. He departed with reluctance, and we remained by ourſelves. Mr Orbe came about eleven, and told me that he had left your friend in the ſtreet. I went in ſearch of him. I took him by the hand; he trembled like a leaf. As he went through the anti-chamber, his ſtrength failed him; he drew his breath with difficulty, and was forced to ſit down.

At length having ſingled out ſome objects by the faint glimmering of a diſtant light——Yes, ſaid he, with a deep ſigh, I recollect theſe apartments. Once in my life I traverſed them ——about the ſame hour——with the ſame myſterious caution——I trembled as I do now—— My heart fluttered with the ſame emotion—— O! raſh creature that I was——though but a poor mortal, I nevertheleſs dared to taſte—— What am I now going to behold in that ſame ſpot, where every thing diffuſed a delight with which my ſoul was intoxicated? What am I going to view, in that ſame object which inſpired and ſhared my tranſports?——the retinue of

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melancholy, the image of death, afflicted virtue, and expiring beauty!

Dear couſin, I will ſpare your tender heart the diſmal detail of ſuch an affecting ſcene. He ſaw you, and was mute. He had promiſed to be ſilent,——but ſuch a ſilence! he fell upon his knees, he ſobbed, and kiſſed the curtains of your bed, he lifted up his hands and eyes, he fetched deep and ſilent groans, he could ſcarce ſtifle his grief and lamentations. Without ſeeing him, you accidently put one of your hands out of bed; he ſeized it with extravagant eagerneſs, the ardent kiſſes he impreſſed on your lick hand, awoked you ſooner than all the noiſe and murmur which buzzed about you. I perceived that you recollected him, and in ſpite of all his reſiſtance and complaints, I forced him from your chamber directly, hoping to elude the impreſſion of ſuch a fleeting apparition, under the pretence of its being the effect of your delirium. But finding that you took no notice of it, I concluded that you had forgot it. I forbade Babet to mention it, and I am perſuaded ſhe has kept her word. A needleſs caution, which love has diſconcerted, and which has only ſerved to aggravate the pain of a recollection which it is too late to efface.

He departed as he had promiſed, and I made him ſwear not to ſtop in the neighbourhood. But, my dear girl, this is not all, I muſt acquaint you with another circumſtance, of which henceforth you cannot long remain ignorant. Lord B—— fled by two days afterwards, he haſtened to overtake him, he joined him at Dijon, and found him ill. The unlucky wretch had

caught

caught the ſmall-pox. He concealed from me that he had never had the diſtemper, and I introduced him without precaution As he could not cure your diſorder, he was determined to partake of it When I recollect the eagerneſs with which he kiſſed your hand, I make no doubt but he underwent inoculation purpoſely. It is impoſſible to have been worſe prepared to receive it, but it was the inoculation of love, and it proved fortunate. The Author of life preſerved the moſt tender lover that ever exiſted, he is recovered, and according to my Lord's laſt letter, they are by this time actually ſet out for Paris.

You ſee, my too lovely couſin, that you ought to baniſh thoſe melancholy terrors which alarm you without reaſon You have long ſince renounced the perſon of your friend, and you find that his life is ſafe Think of nothing therefore, but how to preſerve yours, and how to make the promiſed ſacrifice to paternal affection with becoming grace. Ceaſe to be the ſport of vain hope, and to feed yourſelf with chimeras You are in great haſte to be proud of your deformity be more humble, for, believe me, you have yet too much reaſon to be ſo You have undergone a cruël infection, but it has ſpared your face. What you take for ſeams, is nothing but a redneſs which will ſoon wear off I was worſe affected than you, and yet you ſee I am tolerable. My angel, you will ſtill be beautiful in ſpite of yourſelf and do you think that the enamoured Wolmar, who, in three years abſence, could not conquer a paſſion conceived in eight days, is likely to be cured of it, when he has an opportunity

portunity of ſeeing you every hour? Oh! how deſperate is your condition, if your only reſource is the hope of being diſagreeable!

LETTER CVIII

From JULIA

IT is too much, it is too much. O my friend, you have overcome I am not proof againſt ſuch powerful love, my reſolution is exhauſted My conſcience affords me the conſolatory teſtimony, that I have exerted my utmoſt efforts. Heaven, I hope, will not call me to account for more than it has beſtowed upon me This ſorrowful heart, which coſt you ſo dear, and which you have more than purchaſed, is yours without reſerve it was attached to you the firſt moment my eyes beheld you it will remain yours to my dying breath. You have too much deſerved it, ever to be in danger of loſing it, and I am weary of being the ſlave of a chimerical virtue at the expence of juſtice.

Yes, my moſt tender and generous lover, your Julia will be ever yours, will ever love you I muſt, I will, I ought. I reſign to you the empire which love has given you, nothing ſhall ever deprive you of it more The deceitful voice which murmurs at the bottom of my ſoul, whiſpers in vain it ſhall no longer betray me What are the vain duties it preſcribes, in oppoſition to a paſſion which heaven itſelf inſpired, is not the obligation which binds me to you, the moſt ſolemn of all? is it not to you alone

lone that I have given an abſolute promiſe? was it not the firſt vow of my heart, never to forget you? and is not your inviolable attachment a freſh tie to ſecure the conſtancy of mine? In the tranſports of love with which I once more ſurrender my heart to thee, my only regret is, that I have ſtruggled againſt ſentiments ſo agreeable and ſo natural. Nature, O gentle nature, reſume thy rights! I abjure the ſavage virtues which conſpire to thy deſtruction Can the inclinations which thou haſt inſpired be more ſeductive than a ſpecious reaſon by which I have been ſo oft miſguided?

Have ſome regard, my amiable friend, for the tenderneſs of my inclinations, you are too much indebted to them to abhor them but allow of a participation which nature and affection demands, let not the rights of blood and friendſhip be totally extinguiſhed by thoſe of love. Do not imagine, that to follow you I will ever quit my father's houſe. Hope not that I will refuſe to comply with the obligations impoſed on me by parental authority The cruel loſs of one of the authors of my being has too well taught me to dread cauſing any affliction to the other No, ſhe from whom he expects all his future comfort, will not increaſe the anguiſh of his ſoul, already too much oppreſſed. I will not deſtroy all that gave me life. No, no, I am ſenſible of my crime, but cannot abhor it Duty, honour, virtue, all theſe conſiderations have loſt their influence; but yet I am not a monſter; I am frail, but not unnatural I am determined, I will not grieve any of the objects of my affection. Let a father, te-

nacious of his word, and jealous of a vain prerogative, diſpoſe of my hand where he has promiſed it, but let love alone diſpoſe of my heart, let my tears inceſſantly trickle down the boſom of my tendereſt friend. Let me be loſt and wretched, but, if poſſible, let every one dear to me be happy and contented On you three my exiſtence depends, and may your felicity make me forget the miſery and deſpair to which I am doomed.

LETTER CIX.

The ANSWER.

WE revive, my Julia, all the real ſentiments of our ſouls reſume their wonted courſe Nature has preſerved our exiſtence, and love has reſtored us to life. Did you ſuppoſe, could you be raſh enough to imagine, you could withdraw your affections from me? I am better acquainted with your heart than yourſelf, that heart which heaven deſtined to be mine! I find they are united by one common thread, which death alone can divide Is it in our power to ſeparate them, or ought we even to attempt it? Are they joined together by ties which man hath formed, and which man can diſſolve? No, no, my Julia! if cruel deſtiny bars our claim to tender conjugal titles, yet nothing can deprive us of the character of faithful lovers, that ſhall be the comfort of our melancholy days, and we will carry it with us to the grave

Thus we recover life only to renew our ſuf-

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ferings, and the conſciouſneſs of exiſtence is to us nothing more than a ſenſe of affliction. Unfortunate beings! how are we altered? how have we ceaſed to be what we once were? where is that enchantment of ſupreme felicity? where are thoſe exquiſite raptures which enlivened our paſſion? Nothing is left of us but our love, love alone remains, and all its charms are eclipſed. O, thou dear and too dutiful girl, thou fond fair one without reſolution! all our misfortunes are derived from thy errors Alas! a heart of leſs purity would not have ſo fatally miſled thee! yes, the honour of thy heart has been our ruin, the upright ſentiments which fill thy breaſt have baniſhed diſcretion. You would endeavour to reconcile filial tenderneſs with unconquerable love, by attempting to gratify all your inclinations, you confound inſtead of conciliating them, and become culpable even through virtue. O Julia, how inconceivable is your power! by what ſtrange magic do you faſcinate my reaſon! even while you endeavour to make me bluſh at our paſſion, you have the art to appear amiable in your very failings You force me to admire you, even while I partake of your remorſe ——— your remorſe! ——— does it become you to feel remorſe? ——— you, whom I loved —— you, whom I ſhall never ceaſe to adore ——can guilt ever approach your ſpotleſs heart? ——O cruel Julia! if you mean to reſtore the heart which belongs to me alone, return it to me ſuch as it was when you firſt beſtowed it

What do you tell me? ——will you venture to intimate———you, fall into the arms of ano-

ther?——shall another possess you?——will you be no longer mine?——or, to complete my horror, will you not be solely mine?—I—shall I suffer such dreadful punishment?——shall I see you survive yourself?——No, I had rather lose you entirely, than share you with another——Why has not heaven armed me with courage equal to the rage which distracts me?——Sooner than *thy* hand should debase itself by a fatal union abhorred by love, and condemned by honour, I would interpose my own, and plunge a poniard in thy breast. I would drain thy chaste heart of blood which infidelity never tainted. with that spotless blood I would mix my own, which burns in my veins with inextinguishable ardour, I would fall in thy arms; I would yield my last breath on thy lips——I would receive thine——How! Julia expiring! those lovely eyes closed by the horrors of death!——that breast, the throne of love, mangled by my hand, [illegible] forth copious streams of blood and life!——No, live and suffer, endure the punishment of my cowardice. No, I wish thou wert no more, but my passion is not so violent as to stab thee O, that you did but know the state of my heart, which is ready to burst with anguish! Never did it burn with so pure a flame. Never were your innocence and virtue so dear to me I am a lover, I know how to prize an amiable object, I am sensible that I do: but I am no more than man, and it is not in human power to renounce supreme felicity. One night, one single night has made a thorough change in my soul. Preserve me, if thou canst, from that dar-

dangerous recollection, and I am virtuous ſtill! But the remembrance of that fatal night is ſunk to the botom of my ſoul, and will darken all the reſt of my days. O Julia, thou moſt adorable object! If we muſt be wretched for ever, yet let us enjoy one hour of tranſport, and then reſign ourſelves to eternal lamentations.

Liſten to the man who loves you. Why ſhould we alone affect to be wiſer than the reſt of mankind, and purſue, with puerile ſimplicity, thoſe chimerical virtues which all the world talks of, and no one practiſes. What! ſhall we pretend to be greater moraliſts than the crowd of philoſophers which people London and Paris, who all laugh at conjugal fidelity, and treat adultery as a jeſt? Inſtances of this nature are far from being ſcandalous, we are not at liberty even to cenſure them, and people of ſpirit would laugh at a man who ſhould ſtifle the affections of his heart out of reſpect to matrimony. In fact, ſay they, an injury which only conſiſts in opinion, is no injury while it remains ſecret. What injury does a huſband receive from an infidelity of which he is ignorant? by how many obliging condeſcenſions does a woman compenſate for her failings *? what en-

* And where did the honeſt Swiſs learn this? Women of gaiety have long ſince aſſumed more importance. They begin by boldly introducing their lovers into the houſe, and if they ſuffer their huſbands to continue there, it is only while they behave towards them with proper reſpect. A woman who ſhould take pains to conceal a criminal intrigue, would ſhew that ſhe was aſhamed, and would be deſpiſed; not one female of ſpirit would take notice of her.

dearments does ſhe not employ to prevent, and to remove his ſuſpicions? Deprived of an imaginary good, he actually enjoys more real felicity; and this ſuppoſed crime which makes ſuch a noiſe, is but an additional tie, which ſecures the peace of ſociety.

O God forbid, thou dear partner of my ſoul, that I ſhould wiſh to preſerve thy affections by ſuch ſhameful maxims! I abhor them, without being able to confute them, and my conſcience is a better advocate than my reaſon. Not that I pride myſelf upon a ſpirit which I deteſt, or that I am fond of a virtue bought ſo dear but I think it leſs criminal to reproach myſelf with my failings, than to attempt to vindicate them, and I conſider an endeavour to ſtifle remorſe, as the ſtrongeſt degree of guilt.

I know not what I write. I find my mind in a horrid ſtate, much worſe than it was even before I received your letter. The hope you tender me is gloomy and melancholy; it totally extinguiſhes that pure light which has ſo often been our guide, your charms are blaſted, and yet appear more affecting, I perceive that you are affectionate and unhappy my heart is overwhelmed with the tears which flow from your eyes, and I bitterly reproach myſelf for having preſumed to taſte a happineſs which I can no longer enjoy but at the hazard of your peace

I perceive, nevertheleſs, that a ſecret ardour fires my ſoul, and revives that courage which my remorſe has ſubdued. Ah, lovely Julia! do you know how many loſſes a love like mine can compenſate? do you know how far a lover, who

who only breathes for you, can make your life agreeable? are you ſenſible that it is for you alone I wiſh to live, to move, to think? No, thou delicious ſource of my exiſtence, I will have no ſoul but thine, I will no longer be any thing but a part of thy lovely ſelf, and you will meet with ſuch a kind reception in the inmoſt receſſes of my heart, that you will never perceive any decay in your charms. Well, we ſhall be guilty, yet we will not be wicked; we ſhall be guilty, yet we will be in love with virtue. ſo far from attempting to palliate our failings, we will bewail them, we will lament together, if poſſible, we will work our redemption by being good and benevolent. Julia! O Julia! what will you, what can you do? Thou canſt never diſengage thyſelf from my heart is it not eſpouſed to thine?

Thoſe vain proſpects of fortune which ſo palpably deluded me, are long ſince forgotten. I now ſolely confine my attention to the duties I owe Lord B——; he will force me with him to England, he imagines I can be of ſervice to him there. Well, I will attend him. But I will ſteal away once every year, I will come in ſecret to viſit you. If I cannot ſpeak to you, at leaſt I ſhall have the pleaſure of gazing on you; I may at leaſt kiſs your footſteps; one glance from your eyes will ſupport me ten months When I am forced to return, and retire from her I love, it will be ſome conſolation to me to count the ſteps which will bring me back again. Theſe frequent journies will be ſome amuſement to your unhappy lover, when he ſets out to viſit you, he will anticipate the pleaſure

pleaſure of beholding you, the remembrance of the tranſports he has felt, will enchant his imagination during his abſence, in ſpite of his cruel deſtiny, his melancholy time will not be utterly loſt, every year will be marked with ſome tincture of pleaſure, and the ſhort lived moments he paſſes near you, will be multiplied during his whole life.

LETTER CX.

From Mrs ORBE.

YOUR miſtreſs is no more, but I have regained my friend, and you too have acquired one, whoſe affection will more than recompenſe your loſs Julia is married, and her merit is ſufficient to make the gentleman happy who has blended his intereſt with her's After ſo many indiſcretions, you ought to thank heaven which has preſerved you both, her from ignominy, and you from the regret of having diſhonoured her. Reverence her change of condition; do not write to her, ſhe deſires you will not Wait till ſhe writes to you, which ſhe will ſhortly do. Now is the time to convince me that you merit that eſteem I ever had for you, and that your heart is ſuſceptible of a pure and diſintereſted friendſhip.

LETTER CXI

From JULIA.

YOU have been ſo long the depoſitary of all the

the ſecrets of my ſoul, that it is not in my power to diſcontinue ſo agreeable a correſpondence. In the moſt important occurrences of life I long to diſcloſe my heart to you Open yours, my beloved friend, to receive what I communicate; treaſure up in your mind the long diſcourſe of friendſhip, which, though it ſometimes renders the ſpeaker too diffuſive, always makes the friendly hearer patient

Attached to the fortune of a huſband, or rather to the will of a parent, by an indiſſoluble tie, I enter upon a new ſtate of life, which death alone can terminate. let us for a moment caſt our eyes on that I have quitted, the recollection of former times cannot be painful to us. Perhaps it will afford ſome leſſons, which will teach me how to make a proper uſe of the time to come perhaps it will open ſome lights which may ſerve to explain thoſe particulars of my conduct, which always appeared myſterious in your eyes. At leaſt, by reflecting on the relation in which we lately ſtood to each other, our hearts will become more ſenſible of the reciprocal obligations from which death alone can releaſe us

It is now near ſix years ſince I firſt ſaw you. You was young, genteel, and agreeable, I had ſeen others more comely, and more engaging; but no one ever excited in me the leaſt emotion, and my heart ſurrendered itſelf to you on the firſt interview I imagined that I ſaw, in your countenance, the traces of a ſoul which ſeemed the counterpart of mine. I thought that my ſenſes only ſerved as organs to more refined ſentiments, and I loved in you not ſo much what I ſaw,

I ſaw, as what I imagined I felt within myſelf It is not two months ſince, that I ſtill flattered myſelf I was not miſtaken: blind Love, ſaid I, was in the right; we were made for each other, if human events do not interrupt the affinity of nature, and if we are allowed to enjoy felicity in this life, we ſhall certainly be happy together

Theſe ſentiments were reciprocal, I ſhould have been deceived had I entertained them alone. The love I felt could not ariſe but from a mutual conformity and harmony of ſouls. We never love unleſs we are beloved, at leaſt our paſſion is ſhort-lived. Thoſe affections which meet with no return, and which are ſuppoſed to make ſo many wretched, are only founded on ſenſuality; if ever they penetrate the heart, it is by means of ſome falſe reſemblance, and the miſtake is quickly diſcovered Senſual love cannot ſubſiſt without fruition, and dies with it the ſublimer paſſion cannot be ſatisfied without engaging the heart, and is as permanent as the analogy which gave it birth *. Such was ours from the beginning; and ſuch, I hope, it will ever be to the end of our days. I perceived, I felt that I was beloved, and that I merited your affection. My lips were ſilent, my looks were conſtrained; but my heart made itſelf underſtood we quickly experienced I know not what, which renders ſilence eloquent, which gives utterance to the downcaſt eye, which occaſions a kind

* Admitting the analogy to be chimerical, yet it laſts as long as the illuſion, which makes us ſuppoſe it real

a kind of forward baſhfulneſs which diſcovers the tumult of deſire through the vail of timidity, and conveys ideas which it dares not expreſs.

I perceived the ſituation of my heart, and judged myſelf loſt the firſt word you ſpoke I obſerved what pain your reſerve coſt you I approved of the diſtance you obſerved, and admired you the more; I endeavoured to recompenſe you for ſuch a neceſſary and painful ſilence, without prejudice to my innocence I offered violence to my natural diſpoſition, I imitated my couſin; I became, like her, arch and lively, to avoid too ſerious explanations, and to indulge a thouſand tender careſſes under cover of that affected ſprightlineſs I took ſuch pains to make your ſituation agreeable, that the apprehenſions of a change increaſed your reſerve.

This ſcheme turned to my diſadvantage we generally ſuffer for aſſuming a borrowed character. Fool that I was! I accelerated my ruin, inſtead of preventing it, I employed poiſon as a palliative, and what ſhould have induced you to preſerve ſilence, was the occaſion which tempted you to explain yourſelf. In vain did I attempt, by an affected indifference, to keep you at a diſtance in our private interviews, that very conſtraint betrayed me you wrote Inſtead of committing your firſt letter to the fire, or delivering it to my mother, I ventured to open it That was my original crime, and all the reſt was a neceſſary conſequence of that firſt fault I endeavoured to avoid anſwering thoſe fatal letters, which I could not forbear reading This violent ſtruggle affected my health I ſaw the abyſs

abyſs in which I was going to plunge I looked upon myſelf with horror, and could not reſolve to endure your abſence. I fell into a kind of deſpair: I had rather that you had ceaſed to live, than not to live for me. I went ſo far as to wiſh your death, nay, even to deſire it. Heaven knew my heart; theſe efforts may make amends for ſome failings

Finding you diſpoſed to implicit obedience, I was determined to ſpeak. I had received from Chalhot ſome inſtructions, which made me too ſenſible of the danger of avowing my paſſion But love, which extorted the confeſſion, taught me to elude its conſequence. You was my laſt reſort; I had ſuch an entire confidence in you, that I furniſhed you with arms againſt my weakneſs, ſuch was my opinion of your integrity, that I truſted you would preſerve me from myſelf, and I did you no more than juſtice. When I found the reſpect you paid to ſo valuable a truſt, I perceived that my paſſion had not blinded me in my opinion of thoſe virtues with which I ſuppoſed you endowed. I reſigned myſelf with greater ſecurity, as I imagined that we ſhould both of us be contented with a ſentimental affection. As I diſcovered nothing at the bottom of my heart but ſentiments of honour, I taſted without reſerve the charms of ſuch a delightful intimacy. Alas! I did not perceive that my diſorder grew inveterate from inattention, and that habit was ſtill more dangerous than love. Being ſenſibly affected by your reſerve, I thought I might relax mine without any riſque, in the innocence of my deſires I hoped to lead you to the heights of virtue, by the tender careſſes of friendſhip

friendſhip. But the grove at Clarens ſoon convinced me that I truſted myſelf too far, and that we ought not to grant the leaſt indulgence to the ſenſes, where prudence forbids us to gratify them entirely. One moment, one ſingle moment, fired me with a deſire which nothing could extinguiſh; and if my will yet reſiſted, my heart was from that time corrupted.

You partook of my diſtraction, your letter made me tremble. The danger was double to preſerve me from you and from myſelf, it was neceſſary to baniſh you This was the laſt effort of expiring virtue but by your flight, you made your conqueſt ſure, and when I ſaw you no more, the languor your abſence occaſioned, deprived me of the little ſtrength I had left to reſiſt you.

When my father quitted the ſervice, he brought M. Wolmar home with him His life which he owed to him, and an intimacy of twenty years, rendered this friend ſo dear, that he could never part from him M Wolmar was advanced in years, and though of high birth had met with no woman who had fixed his affections. My father mentioned me to him, as to a man whom he wiſhed to call his ſon he was deſirous to ſee me, and it was with this intent they came together. It was my fate to be agreeable to him, who never was ſuſceptible of any impreſſion before. They entered into ſecret engagements, and M Wolmar, who had ſome affairs to ſettle in one of the northern courts, where his family and fortune were, deſired time, and took leave upon their mutual engagement After this departure, my father acquainted my

mother and me, that he deſigned him for my huſband; and commanded me, with a tone which cut off all reply from my timidity, to prepare myſelf to receive his hand. My mother, who too plainly perceived the inclinations of my heart, and who had a natural liking for you, made ſeveral attempts to ſhake my father's reſolution. She durſt not abſolutely propoſe you, but ſhe ſpoke of you in ſuch terms, as ſhe hoped might make my father eſteem you, and wiſh to be acquainted with you. but your rank in life made him inſenſible to all your accompliſhments, and though he allowed that high birth could not ſupply them, yet he maintained that birth alone could make them valuable.

The impoſſibility of being happy, fanned the flame which it ought to have extinguiſhed. A flattering deluſion had ſupported me under all my troubles; when that was gone, I had no ſtrength to oppoſe them. While I had the leaſt hope of being yours, I might have triumphed over my inclinations; it would have coſt me leſs to have ſpent my whole life in reſiſtance, than to renounce you for ever, and the very idea of an everlaſting oppoſition, deprived me of fortitude to ſubdue my paſſion.

Grief and love preyed upon my heart, I fell into a ſtate of dejection, which you might perceive in my letters. yours, which you wrote to me from Meillerie, completed my affliction, to the meaſure of my own troubles was added the ſenſe of your deſpair. Alas! the weakeſt mind is always deſtined to bear the troubles of both. The ſcheme you ventured to propoſe to me put the finiſhing ſtroke to my perplexity. Miſery

ſeemed

ſeemed to be the infallible lot of my days, the inevitable choice which remained for me to make, was to add to it either your infelicity or that of my parents I could not endure the horrible alternative, the power of nature has its bounds; ſuch agitations overpowered my ſtrength. I wiſhed to be delivered from life Heaven ſeemed to take pity of me, but cruel death ſpared me for my deſtruction I ſaw you, I recovered, and was undone.

If my failings did not contribute to my felicity, I was not diſappointed I never conſidered them as the means to procure happineſs I perceived that my heart was formed for virtue, without which I could never be happy, I fell through weakneſs, not from error; I had not even blindneſs to plead in excuſe for my frailty I was bereaved of every hope, it was impoſſible for me to be otherwiſe than unfortunate Innocence and love were equally requiſite to my peace as I could not preſerve them both, and was witneſs to your diſtraction, I conſulted your intereſt alone in my choice, and ſo ruined myſelf, to ſave you.

But it is not ſo eaſy, as many imagine, to forſake virtue She continues long to torment thoſe who abandon her, and her charms, which are the delight of refined ſouls, conſtitute the chief puniſhment of the wicked, who are condemned to be in love with her when they can no longer enjoy her Guilty, yet not depraved, I could not eſcape the remorſe which purſued me, honour was dear to me, even after it was gone, though my ſhame was ſecret, it was not leſs grievous, and though the whole world

had been witness to it, I could not have been more sensibly affected. I comforted myself under my affliction, like one who having a wound dreads a mortification, and who, by the sense of pain, is encouraged not to despair of a cure.

Nevertheless, my shameful state was insupportable. By endeavouring to stifle the reproach of guilt, without renouncing the crime, I experienced what every honest mind feels when it goes astray, and is fond of its mistake. A new delusion lent its aid to assuage the bitterness of repentance, I flattered myself, that my frailty would afford me the means of repairing my indiscretion, and ventured to form a design of [illegible] my father to unite our hands. I depended on the first pledge of our love to close this delightful union. I prayed to heaven for [illegible] as the pledge of my return to virtue, [illegible] our mutual happiness. I wished for it with as much earnestness as another in my place would have dreaded it. The tenderness of love, [illegible] illusion, allayed the murmurs of my conscience, the effects I hoped to derive from my frailty inspired me with consolation, and this pleasing expectation was all the hope and comfort of my life.

As soon as I should discover evident symptoms of my pregnancy, I was determined to make a public declaration of my condition to Mr Per[illegible], in the presence of the whole family. I am timorous, it is true. I was sensible how dear such

* Minister of the parish

ſuch a declaration would coſt me but honour itſelf inſpired me with courage, and I choſe rather to bear at once the confuſion I deſerved, than to nouriſh everlaſting infamy at the bottom of my ſoul. I knew that my father would either doom me to death, or give me to my lover this alternative had nothing in it terrible to my apprehenſion, and whatever might be the event, I conſidered that this ſtep would bring all my ſufferings to a period

This, my dear friend, was the myſtery which I concealed from you, and which you ſo anxiouſly endeavoured to penetrate A thouſand reaſons conſpired to make this reſerve neceſſary with a man of your impetuoſity, not to mention that it would have been imprudent to have armed your indiſcreet importunity with a new pretext. It was above all things requiſite to remove you during ſuch a perilous ſituation, and I well knew that you would never have conſented to leave me in ſuch an extremity, had you been acquainted with it

Alas! I was once more deceived by ſuch a flattering expectation Heaven refuſed to favour deſigns which were conceived in wickedneſs I did not deſerve the honour of being a mother, my ſcheme was abortive, and I was even deprived of an opportunity of expiating my frailty, at the expence of my reputation Diſappointed in my hope, the indiſcreet aſſignation which expoſed your life to danger, was a raſhneſs which my fond love coloured with this gentle palliation I imputed the ill ſucceſs of my wiſhes to myſelf, and my heart, miſled by its deſires, flattered itſelf that its eagerneſs to gratify

them aroſe entirely from my anxiety to render them lawful hereafter

At one time I thought my wiſhes accompliſhed that miſtake was the ſource of my moſt bitter affliction, and after nature had granted the petition of love, the ſtroke of deſtiny came with aggravated cruelty You know the accident which deſtroyed my laſt hopes, together with the fruit of my love That misfortune happened during our ſeparation, as if heaven at that time intended to oppreſs me with all the evils I merited, and to cut off at once every tie by which our union might be accompliſhed

Your departure put an end to my deluſion and to my pleaſures, I diſcovered, but too late, the chimeras which had impoſed upon me I perceived that I had fallen into a ſtate truly deſpicable, and felt myſelf completely wretched; which was the inevitable conſequence of love without innocence, and hopeleſs deſires which I could never extinguiſh. Tortured by a thouſand fruitleſs griefs, I ſtifled reflections which were as painful as unprofitable, I no longer looked upon myſelf as worthy of conſideration, and devoted my life to ſolitude for you. I had no honour, but yours, no hope, but in your happineſs, and no ſentiments were capable of affecting me but thoſe which came from you.

Love did not make me blind to your faults, but it made thoſe faults dear to me; and ſo powerful was its deluſion, that I ſhould have loved you leſs, had you been more perfect Acquainted with your heart and your impetuoſity of temper, I was ſenſible, that with more courage than I, you had leſs patience, and that the

the afflictions which oppreſſed my ſoul would drive yours to deſpair It was for this reaſon I always carefully concealed from you my father's promiſe, and at our parting, taking advantage of Lord B——'s zeal for your intereſt, and with a view to make you more attentive to your own welfare, flattered you with a hope which I myſelf did not entertain. Yet more, apprized of the danger which threatened us, I took the only precaution for our mutual ſecurity, and by a ſolemn engagement having made you as much as poſſible maſter of my will, I hoped to inſpire you with confidence, and myſelf with fortitude, by means of a promiſe which I never durſt violate, and which might inſure your tranquillity of mind. I own it was a needleſs obligation, and yet I ſhould never have infringed it Virtue is ſo eſſential to our ſouls, that when we have once abandoned that which is real, we preſently faſhion another after the ſame model, and keep the more ſtrongly attached to this ſubſtitute, becauſe perhaps it is of our own chuſing

I need not tell you what perturbation I experienced after your departure The worſt of my apprehenſions was the dread of being forſaken. The place of your reſidence made me tremble. Your manner of living increaſed my terror I imagined that I already ſaw you debaſed into a man of intrigue. An ignominy of this nature touched me more ſenſibly than all my afflictions; I had rather have ſeen you wretched than contemptible, after ſo many troubles to which I had been inured, your diſhonour was the only one I could not ſupport

Theſe

Theſe apprehenſions, which the ſtyle of your letters had begun to confirm, were quickly removed, and by ſuch means as would have made any other completely uneaſy. I allude to the diſorderly courſe of life into which you was ſeduced, and of which your ready and frank confeſſion was, of all the proofs of your ſincerity, that which affected me moſt ſenſibly I knew you too well to be ignorant what ſuch a confeſſion muſt have coſt you, even if I had been no longer dear to you I ſaw that love alone had triumphed over ſhame, and extorted it from you I judged that a heart ſo ſincere was incapable of diſguiſed infidelity; I diſcovered leſs guilt in your failing, than merit in the confeſſion, and calling to mind your former engagements, was entirely cured of jealouſy.

And yet, my worthy friend, my cure did not increaſe my felicity, for one torment leſs, a thouſand others roſe up inceſſantly, and I was never more ſenſible of the folly of ſeeking in an unſettled mind, that repoſe which nothing but prudence can beſtow I had for a long time ſecretly lamented the beſt of mothers, who waſted inſenſibly by a fatal decay. Bab, whom the unhappy conſequence of my miſconduct obliged me to make my confident, betrayed me, and diſcovered our mutual love, and my frailty, to my mother I had juſt received your letters from my couſin, when they were ſeized. The proofs were too convincing. grief deprived her of the little ſtrength her illneſs had left her I thought I ſhould have expired at her feet with remorſe So far from conſigning me to the death I merited, ſhe concealed my ſhame, and

was

was contented to bemoan my fall Even you, who had ſo ungratefully abuſed her kindneſs, did not become odious to her I was witneſs to the effect which your letter produced on her tender and affectionate mind. Alas! ſhe wiſhed for your happineſs and mine She attempted more than once——but why ſhould I recal a hope which is now for ever extinguiſhed? heaven decreed it otherwiſe She cloſed her melancholy days with the afflicting conſideration of being unable to move a rigid huſband, and of leaving a daughter behind ſo little worthy of her.

Oppreſſed with ſuch a cruel loſs, my ſoul had no other ſtrength than what it received from that impreſſion, the voice of nature uttered groans which ſtifled the murmurs of love I regarded the author of my troubles with a kind of horror I endeavoured to ſmother the deteſtable paſſion which had brought them upon me, and to renounce you for ever. This, no doubt, was what I ought to have done had I not ſufficient cauſe of lamentation the remainder of my days, without ſearching for new ſubjects of affliction? Every thing ſeemed to favour my reſolution. If melancholy ſoftens the mind, deep affliction hardens it The remembrance of my dying mother effaced your image, we were diſtant from each other, hope had entirely abandoned me, my incomparable friend was never more great or more deſerving wholly to engroſs my heart Her virtue, her diſcretion, her friendſhip, her tender careſſes, ſeemed to have purified it, I thought I had forgotten you, and imagined myſelf cured But it was too late, what I took for the indifference of extin-

extinguiſhed love, was nothing but the heavineſs of deſpair.

As a ſick man who falls into a weak ſtate when free from pain, is ſuddenly revived by more acute ſenſations; ſo I quickly perceived all my troubles renewed, when my father acquainted me with Mr Wolmar's approaching return. Invincible love then gave me incredible ſtrength. For the firſt time I ventured to oppoſe my father to his face. I frankly proteſted that I could never like Mr Wolmar, that I was determined to die ſingle, that he was maſter of my life, but not of my affections, and that nothing could ever make me alter my reſolution. I need not deſcribe the rage he was in, nor the treatment I was obliged to endure. I was immoveable: my timidity once vanquiſhed carried me to the other extreme; and if my tone was leſs imperious than my father's, it was nevertheleſs equally reſolute.

He found that I was determined, and that he ſhould make no impreſſion on me by dint of authority. For a minute I thought myſelf freed from his perſecution. But what became of me, when on a ſudden I ſaw the moſt rigid father ſoftened into tears, and proſtrate at my feet! Without ſuffering me to riſe, he embraced my knees, and fixing his ſtreaming eyes on mine, he addreſſed himſelf to me in a plaintive voice, which ſtill murmurs in my ears, "O my child! have ſome reſpect for the grey hairs of your unhappy father, do not ſend me with ſorrow to the grave, after her who bore thee. Ah! will all her family owe their deaths to Julia?"

Imagine my grief and aſtoniſhment. That atti-

attitude, that tone, that geſture, thoſe words, that horrible idea, overpowered me to that degree, that I dropped half dead into his arms; and it was not till after repeated ſobs, which for ſome time ſtifled utterance, that I was able to anſwer him in a faint and faltering voice "O my father! I was armed againſt your menaces, but I am not proof againſt your tears. You will be the death of your daughter"

We were both of us in ſuch violent agitation, that it was a long while before we recovered. In the mean time, recollecting his laſt words, I concluded that he was better informed of the particulars of my conduct than I had imagined; and being reſolved to turn thoſe circumſtances of information againſt him, I was preparing, at the hazard of my life, to make a confeſſion which I had too long deferred, when he haſtily interrupted me, and, as if he had foreſeen and dreaded what I was going to declare, ſpoke to me in the following terms.

"I know you have encouraged inclinations "unworthy a girl of your birth It is time to "ſacrifice to duty and honour a ſhameful paſ- "ſion which you ſhall never gratify but at the "expence of my life Attend to what your fa- "ther's honour, and your own, require of you, "and then determine for yourſelf

"Mr Wolmar is of noble extraction, and di- "ſtinguiſhed by all the accompliſhments requi- "ſite to maintain his dignity, one who enjoys "the public eſteem, and who deſerves it. I "am indebted to him for my life, and you are "no ſtranger to the engagement I have con- "cluded with him. You are farther to under- "ſtand,

" ſtand, that on his return home to ſettle his " concerns, he found himſelf involved by an " unfortunate turn of affairs. he had loſt the " greateſt part of his eſtate, and it was by ſin- " gular good luck that he himſelf eſcaped being " exiled to Siberia. he is coming back with " the melancholy wreck of his fortune, upon " the ſtrength of his friend's word, which ne- " ver yet was forfeited. Tell me now, in what " manner I ſhall receive him on his return, " ſhall I ſay to him, ' Sir, I promiſed you my ' daughter while you were in affluent circum- ' ſtances; but, now your fortune is ruined, I ' muſt retract my word, for my daughter will ' never be yours?' If I do not expreſs my refu- " ſal in theſe words, it will be interpreted in " this manner. To alledge your pre-engage- " ment, will be conſidered as a pretence, or it " will be imputed as an additional diſgrace to " me, and we ſhall paſs you for an abandoned " girl, and I for a diſhoneſt man, who has ſa- " crificed his word and honour to ſordid inter- " eſt, and has added ingratitude to infidelity. " My dear child, I have lived too long now to " cloſe an unblemiſhed life with infamy, and " ſixty years ſpent with honour are not to be " proſtituted in a quarter of an hour

" You perceive, therefore," continued he, " how unreaſonable is every objection which " you can offer. Judge whether the giddy paſ- " ſion of youth, whether attachments which " modeſty diſavows, are to be put in competi " tion with the duty of a child, and the honour " by which a parent ſtands bound If the diſ- " pute were, which of us two ſhould fall a vic-

" tim

" tim to the happineſs of the other, my tender-
" neſs would challenge the right of making that
" ſacrifice to affection, but honour, my child,
" calls upon me, and that always determines the
" reſolution of him whoſe blood you inherit."

I was not without a pertinent anſwer to theſe remonſtrances, but my father's prejudices confirmed him in his principles, ſo different from mine, that reaſons which appeared to me unanſwerable, would not have had the leaſt weight with him. Beſides, not knowing whence he had gathered the intelligence he ſeemed to have gained with reſpect to my conduct, or how far his information extended, apprehending likewiſe by his eagerneſs to interrupt me, that he had formed his reſolution with regard to the matter I was going to communicate, and above all, being reſtrained by a ſenſe of ſhame which I could never ſubdue, I rather choſe to avail myſelf of an excuſe, which I thought would have greater weight, as it ſquared more with my father's peculiarity of thinking. I therefore made a frank declaration of the engagement I had made with you, I proteſted that I would never be falſe to my word, and that, whatever was the conſequence, I would never marry without your conſent

In truth, I was delighted to find that my ſcruples did not offend him he reproached me ſeverely for entering into ſuch an engagement, but he made no objection to its validity, ſo exalted are ideas which a gentleman of honour naturally entertains with regard to the faith of engagements, and ſo ſacred a thing does he eſteem a promiſe! Inſtead of attempting therefore to

diſpute the force of my obligation to you, he made me write a note, which he incloſed in a letter, and ſent away directly *. With what agitation did I expect your anſwer! how often did I wiſh that you might ſhew leſs delicacy than you ought! But I knew you too well to doubt your compliance; and was ſenſible, that the more painful you felt the ſacrifice required of you, the readier you would be to undergo it. Your anſwer came, it was concealed from me during my illneſs, after my recovery, my fears were confirmed, and there remained for me no farther excuſes. At leaſt, my father declared he would admit of no more, and the dreadful expreſſion he had made uſe of, gave him ſuch an aſcendency over my will, that he made me ſwear never to ſay any thing to Mr Wolmar which might make him averſe from marrying me; for, he added, that will appear to him like a trick concerted between us, and at all events the marriage muſt be concluded.

You know, my dear friend, that my conſtitution, which is ſtrong enough to endure fatigue and inclemency of weather, is not able to reſiſt the violence of paſſion, and that too exquiſite a ſenſibility is the ſource of all the evils which have afflicted my mind and body. Whether continued grief had tainted my blood, or whether nature took that opportunity to purify it from the fatal effects of fermentation, I found myſelf violently diſordered at the end of our converſation. When I left my father's room, I endeavoured to write a line to you, but found myſelf

* See page 142 of the preſent volume.

ſelf ſo ill, that I was obliged to go to bed, from whence I hoped never to riſe You are too well acquainted with the reſt. My imprudence led you to indiſcretion You came, I ſaw you, and thought that I had only beheld you in one of thoſe dreams, which, during my delirium, ſo often preſented your image before me. But when I found that you had really been there; that I had actually ſeen you; that being reſolved to partake of my diſtemper which you could not cure, you had purpoſely caught the infection, I could no longer reſiſt this laſt proof, and finding that the tenderneſs of your affection ſurvived even hope itſelf, my love, which I had taken ſuch pains to ſmother, inſtantly broke through all reſtraint, and revived with more ardour than ever. I perceived that I was doomed to love in ſpite of myſelf, I was ſenſible that I muſt be guilty; that I could neither reſiſt my father nor my love, and that I could never reconcile the rights of love and conſanguinity, but at the expence of honour Thus all my noble ſentiments were utterly extinguiſhed; all my faculties were altered; guilt was no longer horrible in my ſight, I felt a thorough change within me. at length the unruly tranſports of a paſſion, rendered impetuous by oppoſition, threw me into the moſt diſmal dejection with which human nature was ever oppreſſed, I even dared to deſpair of virtue. Your letter, which was rather calculated to awaken remorſe than to ſtifle it, completed my diſtraction. My heart was ſo far depraved, that my reaſon could not withſtand the arguments of your plauſible philoſophy. Such horrible ideas crowded into my

mind, as it had never been tainted with before My will ſtill oppoſed them, but my imagination grew familiar with them, and if my ſoul did not harbour anticipated guilt, yet I was no longer miſtreſs of that noble reſolution which alone is capable of reſiſting temptation.

I am ſcarce able to proceed Let me ſtop a while. Recal to your mind thoſe days of innocence and felicity, when the lively and tender paſſion with which we were mutually animated, only tended to refine our ſentiments, when that holy ardour contributed to render modeſty more lovely, and honour more amiable, when our very deſires ſeemed kindled only that we might have the glory of ſubduing them, and of rendering ourſelves more worthy of each other Look over our firſt letters; reflect on thoſe moments ſo fleeting and ſo little enjoyed, when love appeared to us arrayed in all the charms of virtue, and when we were too fond of each other to form any connections which ſhe condemned

What were we then, and what are we now? Two tender lovers ſpent a whole year together in the moſt painful ſilence; they ſcarce ventured to breathe a ſigh, but their hearts underſtood each other, they thought their ſufferings great, yet they were happy, had they but known it Their mutual ſilence was ſo intelligible, that at length they ventured to converſe, but, ſatisfied with the power of triumphing over their inclinations, and with giving each other the glorious proofs of their victory, they paſſed another year in a reſerve ſcarce leſs ſevere, they imparted their troubles to each other, and were happy But theſe violent ſtruggles were too painful to

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be ſupported long; one moment's weakneſs led them aſtray; they forgot themſelves in their tranſports but if they were no longer chaſte, they were ſtill conſtant; at leaſt heaven and nature authoriſed the ties which united them, at leaſt virtue was ſtill dear to them, they ſtill loved and honoured her charms, they were leſs corrupted than debaſed. They ſtill enjoyed felicity, though leſs worthy of it.

What now are thoſe affectionate lovers who glowed with ſo refined a paſſion, and were ſo ſenſible of the worth of honour? Who can be acquainted with their condition, without ſighing over them?—Behold them a prey to guilt. Even the idea of defiling the marriage-bed does not now ſtrike them with horror—they meditate adultery!—How! is it poſſible that they can be the ſame pair? Are not their ſouls entirely altered? How could that lovely image, which the wicked never behold, be effaced in the minds where it once ſhone ſo bright? Are not they, who have once taſted of the charms of virtue, for ever after diſguſted with vice? How many ages have paſſed to produce this aſtoniſhing alteration? What length of time could be capable of deſtroying ſo delightful a remembrance, and of extinguiſhing the true ſenſe of happineſs in thoſe who had once enjoyed it? Alas! if the firſt ſtep of irregularity moves with a ſlow and painful pace, how eaſy and precipitate are thoſe which follow! How great is the illuſion of paſſion! it is that which faſcinates reaſon, betrays prudence, and new-models nature before we perceive the change. A ſingle moment leads us aſtray, a ſingle ſtep draws us out of the right

path. From that time an irreſiſtible propenſity hurries us on to our ruin. From that time we fall into a gulph, and ariſe frightened to find ourſelves oppreſſed with crimes, with hearts formed for virtue. My dear friend, let us drop the curtain. Can it be neceſſary to ſee the dangerous precipice it conceals from us, in order to avoid approaching it? I reſume my narrative

Mr Wolmar arrived, and made no objection to the alteration in my features. My father preſſed me. The mourning for my mother was juſt over, and my grief was proof againſt time. I could form no pretence to elude my promiſe, and was under a neceſſity of fulfilling it. I thought the day which was to ſeparate me for ever from you and from myſelf, would have been the laſt of my life. I could have beheld the preparations for my funeral with leſs horror than thoſe for my marriage. The nearer the fatal moment approached, the leſs I found myſelf able to extirpate my firſt affections; my efforts rather ſerved to inflame than to extinguiſh them. At length I gave over the fruitleſs ſtruggle. At the very time that I was prepared to ſwear eternal conſtancy to another, my heart ſtill vowed eternal love to thee, and I was carried to the temple as a polluted victim, which defiles the altar on which it is ſacrificed.

When I came to the church, I felt, at my entrance, a kind of emotion which I had never experienced before An inconceivable terror ſeized my mind in that ſolemn and auguſt place, which was full of the Being worſhipped there. A ſudden horror made me ſhiver. Trembling and ready to faint, it was with difficulty I reach-

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ed the altar. Far from being compoſed, I found my diſorder increaſe during the ceremony, and every object I beheld ſtruck me with diſmay. The gloomy light of the temple, the profound ſilence of the ſpectators, and their decent and collected deportment, the train of all my relations; the awful look of my venerable father, all contributed to give the ceremony an air of ſolemnity which commanded my attention and reverence, and which made me ſhudder at the very thought of perjury. I imagined that I beheld the inſtrument of Providence, and that I heard the voice of heaven, in the miniſter, who pronounced the holy liturgy with uncommon ſolemnity. The purity, the dignity, the ſanctity of marriage, ſo forcibly expreſſed in the words of Scripture, the chaſte the ſublime duties it inculcates, and which are ſo important to the happineſs, the order, the peace, the being of human nature, ſo agreeable in themſelves to be obſerved, all conſpired to make ſuch an impreſſion upon me, that I felt a thorough revolution within me An inviſible power ſeemed ſuddenly to rectify the diſorder of my affections, and to ſettle them according to the laws of duty and of nature. The eternal and omnipreſent Power, ſaid I to myſelf, now reads the bottom of my ſoul, he compares my ſecret will with my verbal declaration, heaven and earth are witneſs to the ſolemn engagement I am going to contract; and they ſhall be witneſs of my fidelity in obſerving the obligation. What human duty can they regard, who dare to violate the firſt and moſt ſacred of all?

A caſual glance on Mr and Mrs Orbe, whom I ſaw

I ſaw at the ſide of each other, fixing their tender looks on me, affected me more powerfully than did all the other objects around me. "O moſt amiable and virtuous pair! though your love is leſs violent, are you therefore leſs cloſely attached to each other? Duty and honour are the bonds which unite you; affectionate friends! faithful couple! you do not burn with that devouring flame which conſumes the ſoul, but you love each other with a gentle and refined affection, which nouriſhes the mind, which prudence authoriſes, and which reaſon directs, you therefore enjoy more ſubſtantial felicity. Ah! that, in an union like yours, I could recover the ſame innocence, and attain the ſame happineſs! if I have not like you deſerved it, I will at leaſt endeavour to make myſelf worthy of it by your example." Theſe ſentiments awakened my hopes, and revived my courage I conſidered the ſacred tie I was preparing to form, as a new ſtate which would purify my ſoul, and reſtore me to a juſt ſenſe of my duty. When the miniſter aſked me, whether I promiſed perfect obedience and fidelity to him whom I received for my huſband, I made the promiſe not only with my lips but with my heart; and I will keep it inviolably till my death.

When we returned home, I ſighed for an hour's ſolitude and recollection. I obtained it, not without difficulty; and however eager I was to make the beſt advantage of it, I nevertheleſs entered into ſelf-examination with reluctance, being afraid leſt I ſhould diſcover that I had only been affected by ſome tranſitory impreſſions, and that at the bottom I ſhould find myſelf as un-

unworthy a wife, as I had been an indiſcreet girl. The method of making the trial was ſure, but dangerous, I began it by turning my thoughts on you. My heart bore witneſs that no tender recollection had profaned the ſolemn engagement I had lately made. I could not conceive, without aſtoniſhment, how your image could have forborne its obſtinate intruſion, and have left me ſo long at reſt, amidſt ſo many occaſions which might have recalled you to my mind, I ſhould have miſtruſted my inſenſibility and forgetfulneſs, as treacherous dependences, which were too unnatural to be laſting. I found, however, that I was in no danger of deluſion I was ſenſible that I ſtill loved you as much, if not more than ever, but I felt my affection for you without a bluſh. I found that I could venture to think of you, without forgetting that I was the wife of another. When a tacit ſelf-confeſſion reported how dear you was to me, my heart was affected, but my conſcience and my ſenſes were compoſed, and from that moment I perceived that my mind had undergone a real change What a torrent of pure joy then ruſhed into my ſoul! what tranquil ſenſations, ſo long effaced, then began to revive a heart which ignominy had ſtained, and to diffuſe over my whole frame an unuſual ſerenity! I ſeemed as if I had been new born, and fancied that I was entering into another life. O gentle and balmy virtue! I am regenerated for thee, thou alone canſt make life dear to me; to thee alone I conſecrate my being Oh! I have too fatally experienced the loſs of thee, ever to abandon thee a ſecond time.

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In the rapture of a change ſo great, ſo ſudden, ſo unexpected, I ventured to reflect on my ſituation the preceding day I trembled on thinking on what a ſtate of unworthy debaſement I had been reduced by forgetting what I owed to myſelf; and I ſhuddered at all the dangers I had run ſince my firſt ſtep of deviation. What a happy revolution of mind enabled me to diſcover the horror of the crime which threw temptation before me, and how did the love of diſcretion revive within me! By what uncommon accident, ſaid I, could I hope to be more faithful to love, than to honour, which I held in ſuch high eſteem? what good fortune would prevent your inconſtancy or my own, from delivering me a prey to new attachments? how could I oppoſe to another lover, that reſiſtance which the firſt had conquered, and that ſhame which had been accuſtomed to yield to inclination? Should I pay more regard to the rights of extinguiſhed love, than I did to the claim of virtue, while it maintained its full empire in my ſoul? What ſecurity could I have to love no other but you, except that inward aſſurance which deceives all lovers, who ſwear eternal conſtancy, and inconſiderately perjure themſelves upon every change of their affections? Thus one deviation from virtue would have led to another; and vice, grown habitual, would no longer have appeared horrible in my ſight. Fallen from honour to infamy, without any hold to ſtop me, from a ſeduced virgin I ſhould have become an abandoned woman, the ſcandal of my ſex, and the torment of my family. What has ſaved me from ſo natural a con-

conſequence of my firſt tranſgreſſion? what checked me after my firſt guilty ſtep? what has preſerved my reputation, and the eſteem of my beloved friends? what has placed me under the protection of a virtuous and diſcreet huſband, whoſe character is amiable, whoſe perſon is agreeable, and who is full of that reſpect and affection for me which I have ſo little deſerved? what, in ſhort, enables me to aſpire after the character of a virtuous wife, and gives me courage to render myſelf worthy of that title? I ſee, I feel it, it is the friendly hand which has conducted me through the paths of darkneſs, that now removes the vail of error from my eyes; and, in my own deſpite, reſtores me to myſelf The gentle voice which inceſſantly murmured within me now raiſed its tone, and thundered in my ears, at the very moment that I was near being loſt for ever. The Author of all truth would not allow me to quit his preſence with the conſcious guilt of deteſtable perjury, and preventing my crime by my remorſe, hath ſhewn me the frightful abyſs into which I was ready to fall. Eternal Providence! who doſt make the inſect crawl, and the heavens revolve, thou art watchful over the leaſt of all thy works! thou haſt recalled me to that virtue which I was born to revere! deign therefore to receive from a heart purified by thy goodneſs, that homage which thou alone haſt rendered worthy thy acceptance

That inſtant, being impreſſed with a lively ſenſe of the danger I had eſcaped, and of the ſtate of honour and ſecurity in which I was happily re-eſtabliſhed, I proſtrated myſelf on the ground,

ground, and lifting my ſuppliant hands to heaven, I invoked that Being enthroned on high, whoſe pleaſure ſupports or deſtroys, by means of our own ſtrength, that free-will he has beſtowed. "I eagerly (ſaid I) embrace the proffered good, of which Thou alone art the author. I will love the huſband to whom thou haſt attached me. I will be faithful, becauſe it is the chief duty which unites private families and ſociety in general I will be chaſte, becauſe it is the parent virtue which nouriſhes all the reſt. I will adhere to every thing relative to the order of nature which thou haſt eſtabliſhed, and to the dictates of reaſon which I derive from thee. I recommend my heart to thy protection, and my deſires to thy guidance. Render all my actions conformable to my ſtedfaſt will, which is ever thine, and never more permit momentary error to triumph over the ſettled choice of my life."

After this ſhort prayer, the firſt I ever made with true devotion, I found myſelf confirmed in virtuous reſolutions, it ſeemed ſo eaſy and ſo agreeable to follow theſe dictates, that I clearly perceived where I muſt hereafter reſort for that power to reſiſt my inclinations which I could not derive from myſelf. From this new diſcovery I acquired freſh confidence, and lamented that fatal blindneſs which had ſo long concealed it from me I had never been devoid of religion; but perhaps I had better have been wholly ſo, than to have profeſſed one which was external and mechanical, and which ſatisfied the conſcience, without affecting the heart; one which was confined to ſet forms, and taught

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me to believe in God at ſtated hours, without thinking of him the remainder of my time Scrupulouſly attendant on public worſhip, I nevertheleſs drew no advantage from it to aſſiſt me in the practice of my duty Knowing that I was of a good family, I indulged my inclinations, was fond of ſpeculation, and put my truſt in reaſon. Not being able to reconcile the ſpirit of the goſpel with the manners of the world, nor faith with works, I ſteered a middle courſe, which ſatisfied the vanity of my wiſdom. I had one ſet of maxims for ſpeculation, and another for practice, I forgot in one place the opinions I formed in another; I was a devotee at church, and a philoſopher at home alas! I was nothing any-where: my prayers were but words, my reaſoning mere ſophiſtry, and the only light I followed was the falſe glimmering of an *ignis fatuus*, which led me to deſtruction.

I cannot deſcribe to you how much this inward principle, which had eſcaped me till now, made me deſpiſe thoſe by which I had been ſo ſhamefully miſguided. Tell me, I intreat you, what was the ſtrongeſt reaſon in their ſupport, and on what foundation did they reſt? A favourable inſtinct directs me to good, ſome impetuous paſſion riſes in oppoſition, it takes root in the ſame inſtinct, what muſt I do to deſtroy it? From a contemplation on the order of nature, I diſcover the beauty of virtue, and from its general utility I derive its excellence But what avail theſe arguments, when they ſtand in competition to my private intereſt? and which in the end is of moſt conſequence to me, to pro-

cure my own happineſs at the expence of others, or to promote the felicity of others at the expence of my own happineſs? If the dread of ſhame or puniſhment deters me from committing evil for the ſake of my own private good, I have nothing more to do than to ſin in ſecret virtue then cannot upbraid me, and if I am detected, I ſhall be puniſhed, as at Sparta, not on account of my crime, but becauſe I had not ingenuity to conceal it. In ſhort, admitting the character and the love of virtue to be imprinted in my heart by nature, it will ſerve me as a rule of conduct till its impreſſions are defaced, but how ſhall I be ſure always to preſerve this inward effigy in its original purity, which has no model, among ſublunary beings, to which it can be referred? Is it not evident, that irregular affections corrupt the judgment as well as the will, and that conſcience itſelf changes, and in every age, in every people, in every individual, accommodates itſelf to inconſtancy of opinion and diverſity of prejudice?

Adore the ſupreme Being, my worthy and prudent friend, with one puff of breath you will be able to diſſipate thoſe chimeras of reaſon, which have only a viſionary appearance, and which fly like ſo many ſhadows before immutable truth Nothing exiſts but through Him who is ſelf-exiſtent. It is he who directs the tendency of juſtice, fixes the baſis of virtue, and gives a recompenſe to a ſhort life ſpent according to his will: it is he who proclaims aloud to the guilty, that their ſecret crimes are detected, and gives aſſurance to the righteous in obſcurity, that their virtues are not without

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a witneſs it is he, it is his unalterable ſubſtance, that is the true model of thoſe perfections of which we all bear the image within us It is in vain that our paſſions diſfigure it, its traces, which are allied to the infinite Being, ever preſent themſelves to our reaſon, and ſerve to re-eſtabliſh that which error and impoſture have perverted. Theſe diſtinctions ſeem to me extremely natural; common ſenſe is ſufficient to point them out. Every thing which we cannot ſeparate from the idea of divine eſſence, is God, all the reſt is the work of men It is by the contemplation of this divine model, that the ſoul becomes refined and exalted; that it learns to deſpiſe low deſires, and to triumph over baſe inclinations. A heart impreſſed with theſe ſublime truths, is ſuperior to the mean paſſions of human nature, the idea of infinite grandeur ſubdues the pride of man; the delight of contemplation abſtracts him from groſs deſires, and if the immenſe Being, who is the ſubject of his thoughts, had no exiſtence, it would nevertheleſs be of uſe to exerciſe his mind in ſuch meditations, in order to make him more maſter of himſelf, more vigorous, more happy, and more wiſe

Do you require a particular inſtance of thoſe vain ſubtleties framed by that ſelf-ſufficient reaſon, which ſo vainly relies on its own ſtrength? Let us coolly examine the arguments of thoſe philoſophers, thoſe worthy advocates of a crime, which never yet ſeduced any whoſe minds were not previouſly corrupted Might one not conclude, that, by a direct attack on the moſt holy and moſt ſolemn of all contracts, thoſe danger-

ous diſputants were determined at one ſtroke to annihilate human ſociety in general, which is founded on the faith of engagements? But obſerve, I beſeech you, how they exculpate ſecret adultery? It is, ſay they, becauſe no miſchief reſults from it, not even to the huſband, who is ignorant of the wrong. But can they be certain that he will ever remain ignorant of it? Is it ſufficient to authoriſe perjury and infidelity, that they do no wrong to others? Is the miſchief which the guilty do to themſelves, not ſufficient to create an abhorrence of guilt? Is it no crime to be falſe to our word? to deſtroy, as far as we are able, the obligation of oaths, and the moſt inviolable contracts? Is it no crime to take pains to render ourſelves falſe, treacherous, and perjured? Is it no crime to form attachments which occaſion you to deſire the prejudice, and to wiſh the death of another? Even the death of one whom we ought to love above others, and with whom we have ſworn to live? is not that hate in itſelf an evil, which is productive of a thouſand conſequential crimes? even good itſelf, if attended with ſo many miſchiefs, would, for that reaſon only, be an evil.

Shall one of the parties pretend to innocence, who may chance to be diſengaged, and have pledged his faith to no one? he is groſsly miſtaken. It is not only the intereſt of huſband and wife, but it is the common benefit of mankind, that the purity of marriage be preſerved inviolated. Whenever two perſons are joined together by that ſolemn contract, all mankind enter into a tacit engagement to reſpect the ſacred tie, and to honour the conjugal union, and this

this appears to be a powerful reaſon againſt clandeſtine marriages, which, as they expreſs no public ſign of ſuch an union, expoſe innocent maids to the temptation of adulterous paſſion The public are in ſome meaſure guarantees of a contract which paſſes in their preſence; and we may venture to ſay, that the honour of a modeſt woman is under the ſpecial protection of all good and worthy people. Whoever therefore dares to ſeduce her, is criminal; firſt becauſe he has tempted her to ſin, and that every one is an accomplice in thoſe crimes which he perſuades others to commit in the next place, he ſins directly himſelf, becauſe he violates the public and ſacred faith of matrimony, without which no order or regularity can ſubſiſt in ſociety.

The crime, ſay they, is ſecret, conſequently no injury can reſult from it to any one. If theſe philoſophers believe the exiſtence of a God, and the immortality of the ſoul, can they call that crime ſecret which has for its witneſs the Being principally offended, and the only righteous judge? It is a ſtrange kind of a ſecret which is hid from all eyes except thoſe from which it is our intereſt moſt to conceal it! If they do not however admit of the omnipreſence of the Divinity, yet how can they dare to affirm that they do injury to no one? How can they prove that it is a matter of indifference to a parent to educate heirs who are ſtrangers to his blood? to be encumbered perhaps with more children than he would otherwiſe have had? and to be obliged to diſtribute his fortune among thoſe pledges of his diſhonour, without feeling for them any ſenſa-

tions of parental tenderneſs? If we ſuppoſe theſe philoſophers to be materialiſts, we have then a ſtronger foundation for oppoſing their tenets by the gentle dictates of nature, which plead in every breaſt againſt the principles of a vain philoſophy, and have never yet been controverted by ſound reaſoning. In ſhort, if the body alone produces cogitation, and ſentiment depends entirely on organiſation, will there not be a more ſtrict analogy between two beings of the ſame blood? will they not have a more violent attachment to each other? will there not be a reſemblance between their ſouls as well as their features, which is a moſt powerful motive to inſpire mutual affection?

Is it doing no injury therefore, in your opinion, to deſtroy or diſturb this natural union by the mixture of adulterate blood, and to pervert the principle of that mutual affection which ought to cement all the members of one family? Who would not ſhudder with horror at the thoughts of having one infant changed for another by a nurſe? and is it a leſs crime to make ſuch a change before the infant is born?

If I conſider my own ſex in particular, what miſchiefs do I not diſcover in this incontinency, which is ſuppoſed to do no injury! The debaſement of a guilty woman, who, after the loſs of her honour, ſoon forfeits all other virtues, is alone ſufficient. What manifeſt ſymptoms convey to a tender huſband the intelligence of that injury which they think to juſtify by ſecreſy! the loſs of the wife's affection is ſufficient proof. To what purpoſe will all her affected endeavours ſerve, but to manifeſt her indifference the more!

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Can we impoſe upon the jealous eye of love by feigned careſſes? and what torture muſt he feel, who is attached to a beloved object, whoſe hand embraces, while her heart rejects him! Admitting, however, that fortune ſhould favour a conduct which ſhe has ſo often betrayed, and to ſay nothing of the raſhneſs of truſting our own affected innocence and another's peace to precautions which Providence often thinks proper to diſconcert yet what deceit, what falſehood, what impoſture, is requiſite to conceal a criminal commerce, to deceive a huſband, to corrupt ſervants, and to impoſe upon the public! what a diſgrace to the accomplices! what an example to children! what muſt become of their education amidſt ſo much ſolicitude how to gratify a guilty paſſion with impunity? how is the peace of the family and the union of the heads of it to be maintained? What! in all theſe circumſtances does the huſband receive no injury? But who can make him recompenſe for a heart which ſhould have been devoted to him? who can reſtore him the affections of a valuable woman? who can give him peace of mind, and conjugal confidence? who can cure him of his well-grounded ſuſpicions? who can engage a father to truſt the feelings of nature when he embraces his child?

With regard to the pretended connections which may be formed in families by means of adultery and infidelity, it cannot be conſidered as a ſerious argument, but rather as an abſurd and brutal mockery, which deſerves no other anſwer than diſdain and indignation The treaſons, the quarrels, the battles, the murders with which

which this irregularity has in all ages peſtered the earth, are ſufficient proofs how far the peace and union of mankind is to be promoted by attachments founded in guilt. If any ſocial principle reſults from this vile and deſpicable commerce, it may be compared to that which unites a band of robbers, and which ought to be deſtroyed and annulled in order to inſure the ſafety of lawful communities

I have endeavoured to ſuppreſs the indignation which theſe principles excited in me, in order to diſcuſs them with greater moderation The more extravagant and ridiculous I find them, the more I am intereſted to refute them, in order to make myſelf aſhamed of having liſtened to them with too little reſerve You ſee how ill they can endure the teſt of ſound reaſon, but from whence can we derive the ſacred dictates of reaſon, if not from him who is the ſource of all? and what ſhall we think of thoſe who, in order to miſlead mankind, pervert this heavenly ray, which he gave them as an unerring guide to virtue? Let us abandon this philoſophy of words; let us diſtruſt a fallacious virtue which undermines all other virtues, and attempts to vindicate every vice, to authoriſe the practice of them all. The ſureſt method of diſcovering our duty is diligently to examine what is right, and we cannot long continue the examination without recurring to the Author of all goodneſs. This is what I have done ſince I have taken pains to rectify my principles, and improve my reaſon: this is a taſk you will perform better than I, when you are diſpoſed to purſue the ſame courſe. It is a comfort to me

to

to reflect, that you have frequently nourished my mind with elevated notions of religion, and you, whose heart disguised nothing from me, would not have talked to me in that strain had your sentiments been different. I recollect with pleasure, that conversations of this kind were ever delightful to us. We never found the presence of the supreme Being troublesome it rather filled us with hope than terror it never yet dismayed any but guilty souls; we were pleased to think that he was witness to our interviews, and we loved to exalt our minds to the contemplation of the Deity If we were sometimes abased by shame, we reflected that at least he was privy to our inmost thoughts, and that idea renewed our tranquillity

If this confidence led us astray, nevertheless, the principle on which it was founded, is alone capable of reclaiming us to virtue. Is it not unworthy of a man to be always at variance with himself, to have one rule for his actions, another for his opinions, to think as if he was abstracted from matter, to act as if he was devoid of soul, and never to be capable of appropriating a single action of his life to his own entire self? For my own part, I think the principles of the ancients are sufficient to fortify us, when they are not confined to mere speculation Weakness is incident to human nature, and the merciful Being, who made man frail, will no doubt pardon his frailty, but guilt is a quality which belongs only to the wicked, and will not remain unpunished by the Author of all justice. An infidel, who is otherwise well inclined, practises those virtues he admires, he acts from taste, not from

choice

choice If all his desires happen to be regular, he indulges them without reserve. He would gratify them in the same manner, if they were irregular; for what should restrain him? But he who acknowledges and worships the common Father of mankind, perceives that he is destined for nobler purposes. An ardent desire to fulfil the end of his being, animates his zeal; he follows a more certain rule of action than appetite, he knows how to do what is right at the expence of his inclinations, and to sacrifice the desires of his heart to the call of duty Such, my dear friend, is the heroic sacrifice required of us both. The love which attached us would have proved the delight of our lives, it survived hope, it bid defiance to time and absence, it endured every kind of proof. So sincere a passion ought never to have decayed of itself; it was a sacrifice of which virtue alone was worthy

I must observe farther All circumstances are altered between us, and your heart must accommodate itself to the change. The wife of Mr Wolmar is not your Julia; your change of sentiment with regard to her is unavoidable, and it depends upon your own choice to make the alteration redound to your honour, according to the election you make of vice or virtue I recollect a passage in an author, whose authority you will not controvert "Love (says he) "is destitute of its greatest charm, when it is "abandoned by honour. To be sensible of its "full value, it must warm the heart, and exalt "us by raising the object of our desires Take "away the idea of perfection, and you deprive "love of all its enthusiasm, banish esteem, and

"love

" love is no more How can a woman honour " the man whom ſhe ought to deſpiſe? how " can he himſelf honour her who has not ſcru- " pled to abandon herſelf to a vile ſeducer? " Thus they will ſoon entertain a mutual con- " tempt for each other Love, that celeſtial prin- " ciple, will be debaſed into a ſhameful com- " merce between them They will have loſt " their honour without attaining felicity *.' This, my dear friend, is our leſſon, penned by your own hand never were our hearts more agreeably attached, and never was honour ſo dear to us, as in thoſe happy days when this letter was written Reflect then, how we ſhould be miſled at this time by a guilty paſſion, nouriſhed at the expence of the moſt agreeable tranſports which can inſpire the ſoul! The horror of vice, which is ſo natural to us both, would ſoon extend to the partner of our guilt we ſhould entertain mutual hatred, for having loved each other indiſcreetly, and remorſe would quickly extinguiſh affection Is it not better to refuſe a generous ſentiment, in order to render it permanent? is it not better at leaſt to preſerve what we may grant with innocence? is not this preſerving what is more delightful than all other enjoyments? Yes, my dear and worthy friend, to keep our love inviolable, we muſt renounce each other. Let us forget all that has paſſed, and continue the lover of my ſoul This idea is ſo agreeable that it compenſates for every thing

Thus

* See the firſt vol letter XXIV

Thus have I drawn a faithful picture of my life, and given you a genuine detail of every inward ſentiment. Be aſſured that I love you ſtill I am ſtill attached to you with ſuch a tender and lively affection, that any other than myſelf would be alarmed but I feel a principle of a different kind within me, which ſecures me againſt any apprehenſions from ſuch an attachment I perceive that the nature of my affection, is entirely altered, and in this reſpect, my paſt failings are the grounds of my preſent ſecurity I know that ſcrupulous decorum and the parade of virtue might require more of me, and not be ſatisfied unleſs I utterly forgot you. But I think I have a more certain rule of conduct, and will abide by it. I attend to the ſecret dictates of conſcience, I find nothing there which reproaches me, and it never deceives thoſe who ſincerely conſult it. If this be not ſufficient to juſtify me before the world, it is enough to reſtore my own mind to tranquillity How has this happy change been produced? I know not how. All I know is, that I moſt ardently deſired it God alone has accompliſhed the reſt. I am convinced that a mind once corrupted will ever remain ſo, and will never recover of itſelf, unleſs ſome ſudden revolution, ſome unexpected change of fortune and condition, entirely alters its connections When all its habits are deſtroyed, and all its paſſions modified, by that thorough revolution, it ſometimes reſumes its primitive character, and becomes like a new being recently formed by the hands of nature. Then the recollection of its former unworthineſs may ſerve as a preſervative againſt relapſe. Yeſterday

day we were baſe and abject, to-day we are ſpirited and magnanimous. By thus making a cloſe compariſon between the two different ſtates, we become more ſenſible of the value of that which we have recovered, and more attentive to maintain its ſupport.

My marriage has made me experience ſomething like the change I endeavour to explain to you. This tie, which I dreaded ſo much, has delivered me from a bondage much more dreadful, and my huſband becomes dearer to me for having reſtored me to myſelf You and I were, however, too cloſely attached, for a change of this kind to deſtroy our union. If you loſe an affectionate miſtreſs, you gain a faithful friend; and whatever we may have imagined in our ſtate of deluſion, I cannot believe that the alteration is to your prejudice Let it, I conjure you, encourage you to take the ſame reſolution that I have formed, to become hereafter more wiſe and virtuous, and to refine the leſſons of philoſophy by the precepts of Chriſtian morality I ſhall never be thoroughly happy, unleſs you likewiſe enjoy happineſs, and I am more convinced than ever, that there is no real felicity without virtue. If you ſincerely love me, afford me the agreeable conſolation to find that our hearts correſpond in their return to virtue, as they unhappily agreed in their deviation from it

I need not make any apology for the length of this epiſtle. Were you leſs dear to me, I ſhould have ſhortened it Before I conclude, I have one favour to requeſt of you. A cruel burden weighs upon my heart Mr Wolmar is a ſtranger to my paſt conduct, but an unreſerved ſin-

cerity is part of the duty I owe to him: I ſhould have made the confeſſion a hundred times, you alone have reſtrained me. Though I am acquainted with Mr Wolmar's diſcretion and moderation, yet to mention your name is always to bring you in competition, and I would not do it without your conſent. Can this requeſt be diſagreeable to you? and when I flatter myſelf to obtain your leave, do I depend too much on you or on myſelf? Conſider, I beſeech you, that this reſerve is inconſiſtent with innocence, that it grows every day more inſupportable, and that till I receive your anſwer, I ſhall not enjoy a moment's peace.

LETTER CXII.

To JULIA.

AND wilt thou then no longer be my Julia? Ah! do not ſay ſo, thou worthieſt of thy ſex! Thou art more mine than ever. The whole world owes homage to thy merit It was thee whom I adored, when I firſt became ſuſceptible of the impreſſions of beauty; and I ſhall never ceaſe to adore thee even after death, if my ſoul ſtill retains any recollection of thoſe truly celeſtial charms which were my ſupreme delight when living. The couragious effort, by which you have recovered all your virtue, renders you more equal to your lovely ſelf. No, no, whatever torment the ſenſation and the confeſſion give me, yet I muſt declare, that you never were my Julia more perfectly than at this moment in which you renounce me. Alas! I re-

gain

gain my Julia, by loſing her for ever. But I, whoſe heart ſhudders even at an attempt to imitate your virtue; I, who am tormented with a criminal paſſion, which I can neither ſupport nor ſubdue, am I the man I vainly imagined myſelf to be? was I worthy of your eſteem? what right had I to importune you with my complaints and my deſpair? did it become me to preſume to ſigh for you? Ah, what was I, that I ſhould dare to love the incomparable Julia!

Fool that I am! as though I did not feel myſelf ſufficiently humbled, without taking pains to ſeek freſh circumſtances of humiliation! Why ſhould I increaſe my mortification by enumerating diſtinctions unknown to love? it was that which exalted me; and which made me your equal Our hearts were blended, we ſhared our ſentiments in common, and mine partook of the elevation of yours. Behold me now ſunk into my priſtine baſeneſs! Thou gentle hope, which didſt ſo long feed my ſoul to deceive me, art thou then extinguiſhed, never to return? will ſhe not be mine? muſt I loſe her for ever? does ſhe make another happy?——O rage! O torments of hell!——O faithleſs! ought you ever?——pardon me, pardon me, deareſt madam! have pity on my diſtraction! O you had too much reaſon when you told me, ſhe is no more——ſhe is indeed no more that affectionate Julia to whom I could diſcloſe every emotion of my heart. How could I complain when I found myſelf unhappy? could ſhe liſten to my complaints? was I unhappy?—what then am I now? No, I will not make you bluſh for yourſelf or me Hope is no more, we muſt renounce

each other, we muſt part. Virtue herſelf has pronounced the decree, and your hand has been capable of tranſcribing it. Let us forget each other——Forget me, at leaſt I am determined, I ſwear, that I will never ſpeak to you of myſelf again.

May I yet venture to talk of you, and to intereſt myſelf in what is now the only object of my concern, I mean, your happineſs? In deſcribing to me the ſtate of your mind, you ſay nothing of your preſent ſituation As a reward of the ſacrifice I have made, of which you ought to be ſenſible, at leaſt deign to deliver me from this inſupportable doubt Julia, are you happy? If you are, give me the only comfort of which my deſpair is ſuſceptible if you are not, be compaſſionate enough to tell me ſo, my miſery then will be of leſs duration

The more I reflect on the confeſſion you propoſe to make, the leſs I am inclined to conſent to it, and the ſame motive which always deprived me of reſolution to deny your requeſts, renders me inexorable in this particular It is a ſubject of the laſt importance, and I beſeech you to weigh my reaſons with attention Firſt, your exceſſive delicacy ſeems to lead you into a miſtake, and I do not ſee on what foundation the moſt rigid virtue can exact ſuch a confeſſion from you. No engagement whatever can have any retro-active effect. We cannot bind ourſelves with reſpect to time paſt, nor promiſe what is not in our power to perform how can you be obliged to give your huſband an account of the uſe you formerly made of your liberty, or be reſponſible to him for a fidelity which you never

never promiſed to him? Do not deceive yourſelf, Julia, it is not to your huſband, it is to your friend, that you have violated your engagement. Before we were ſeparated by your father's tyranny, heaven and nature had formed us for each other. By entering into other connections you have been guilty of a crime which love and honour can never forgive, and it is I who have a right to reclaim the prize which Mr Wolmar has raviſhed from me.

If, under any circumſtances duty can exact ſuch a confeſſion, it is when the danger of a relapſe obliges a prudent woman to take precautions for her ſecurity. But your letter has given me more light into your real ſentiments than you imagine In reading it, I felt in my own heart how much yours, upon a near approach, nay, even in the boſom of love, would have abhorred a criminal connection, the horror of which was only diminiſhed by its diſtance.

As duty and honour doth not require ſuch confidence, prudence and reaſon forbid it, for it is running a needleſs riſque of forfeiting every thing that is dear in wedlock, the attachment of a huſband, mutual confidence, and the peace of the family Have you thoroughly weighed the conſequences of ſuch a ſtep? are you ſufficiently acquainted with your huſband, to be certain of the effect it will produce in his diſpoſition? do you know how many men there are, in whom ſuch a confeſſion would produce an immoderate jealouſy and an invincible contempt, and whom it might even inſtigate to attempt your life? In ſuch a nice examination,

we ought to attend to time, place, and the difference of characters. In the country where I reſide at preſent, ſuch a confidence would be attended with no danger; and they who make ſo light of conjugal fidelity, are not people to be violently affected by any frailty of conduct prior to the engagement. Not to mention reaſons which ſometimes render thoſe confeſſions indiſpenſible, and which cannot be applied to your caſe, I know ſome women of tolerable eſtimation, who, with very little riſque, have made a merit of that kind of ſincerity, in order perhaps to obtain by that ſacrifice a confidence which they might afterwards abuſe at will. But in thoſe countries where the ſanctity of marriage is more reſpected, in thoſe countries where that ſacred tie forms a ſolid union, and where huſbands have a real attachment to their wives, they require a more ſevere account of their conduct. they expect that their hearts ſhould never have felt any tender affections but for themſelves; uſurping a right which they have not, they unreaſonably expect their wives to have been theirs even before they belonged to them, and they are as unwilling to excuſe an abuſe of liberty as a real infidelity.

Believe me, virtuous Julia, and diſtruſt a zeal ſo fruitleſs and unneceſſary. Keep this dangerous ſecret, which nothing can oblige you to reveal, the diſcovery of which might utterly ruin you, without being of any advantage to your huſband. If he is worthy of ſuch a confeſſion, it will diſturb his peace of mind, and you will have afflicted him without reaſon, if he is unworthy, why will you give him a pretence

tence for uſing you ill? How do you know whether your virtue, which has defended you from the aſſaults of your heart, will likewiſe ſupport you againſt the influence of domeſtic troubles daily reviving? Do not voluntarily increaſe your misfortunes, leſt they become too powerful for your reſiſtance, and you ſhould at length relapſe by means of your ſcruples into a worſe condition than that from which you have with ſo much difficulty diſengaged yourſelf. Prudence is the baſis of every virtue; conſult that, I intreat you, in this moſt important criſis of your life; and if the fatal ſecret oppreſſes you ſo violently, wait at leaſt, before you unboſom yourſelf, till time and a length of years ſhall have made you more perfectly acquainted with your huſband ſtay till his heart, now affected by the powers of your beauty, ſhall be ſuſceptible of thoſe more laſting impreſſions, which the charms of your diſpoſition cannot fail to make, and till he is become habitually ſenſible of your perfections After all, if theſe reaſons, powerful as they are, ſhould not convince you, yet do not refuſe to liſten to the voice which utters them. O Julia! hearken to a man, who is yet, in ſome degree, ſuſceptible of virtue, and who has a right to expect ſome conceſſion from you, at leaſt, in return for the ſacrifice he has made to you to day.

I muſt conclude this letter I find that I cannot forbear reſuming a ſtrain to which you muſt no longer give ear. Julia, I muſt part with you! young as I am, am I already deſtined to renounce felicity? O time, never to be recalled! time irrevocably paſt! ſource of everlaſting

ing ſorrows! pleaſures, tranſports, delightful ecſtaſies, delicious moments, celeſtial raptures! my love, my only love, the honour and delight of my ſoul! farewell for ever!

LETTER CXIII.

From JULIA.

YOU aſk me, whether I am happy? The queſtion affects me, and by your manner of aſking it, you facilitate my anſwer, for ſo far from wiſhing to baniſh you from my memory as you deſire me, I confeſs that I ſhould not be happy was your affection for me to ceaſe yet at preſent I am happy in moſt reſpects, and nothing but your felicity is wanting to complete mine. If I avoided making any mention of Mr Wolmar in my laſt, it was out of tenderneſs to you. I was too well acquainted with your ſenſibility of temper, not to be under apprehenſions of irritating your pain, but your ſolicitude with regard to my felicity obliging me to mention him on whom it depends, I cannot ſpeak of him without doing juſtice to his worth, as becomes his wife, and a friend to truth.

Mr Wolmar is near fifty years of age but by means of an uniform regular courſe of life, and a ſerenity not ruffled by any violent paſſions, he has preſerved ſuch a healthy conſtitution, and ſuch a florid complexion, that he ſcarce appears to be forty, and he bears no ſymptoms of age, but prudence and experience His countenance

is noble and engaging, his addreſs open and unaffected, his manner rather ſincere than courteous, he ſpeaks little and with great judgment, but without any affectation of being conciſe and ſententious. His behaviour is the ſame to every one, he neither courts nor ſhuns any individual, and he never gives any preference but what reaſon juſtifies

In ſpite of his natural indifference, his heart, ſeconding my father's inclinations, entertained a liking for me, and for the firſt time formed a tender attachment. This moderate and laſting affection has been governed by ſuch ſtrict rules of decorum, and obſerved ſuch a conſtant uniformity, that he was under no neceſſity of altering his manners on changing his condition, and, without violating conjugal decorum, his behaviour to me now is the ſame as it was before marriage. I never ſaw him either gay or melancholy, but always contented, he never talks to me of himſelf, and ſeldom of me, he is not in continual ſearch after me, but he does not ſeem diſpleaſed that I ſhould ſeek his company, and he ſeems to part from me unwillingly He is ſerious, without diſpoſing others to be grave, on the contrary, his ſerenity of manners ſeems an invitation to me to be ſprightly, and as the pleaſures I reliſh are the only pleaſures of which he is ſuſceptible, an endeavour to amuſe myſelf is among the duties I owe to him In one word, he wiſhes to ſee me happy, he has not told me ſo, but his conduct declares it, and to wiſh the happineſs of a wife, is to make her really happy.

With all the attention with which I have been able

able to obſerve him, I cannot diſcover any particular paſſion to which he is attached, except his affection for me it is however ſo even and temperate, that one would conclude he had power to limit the degree of his paſſion, and that he had determined not to love beyond the bounds of diſcretion He is in reality what Lord B—— imagines himſelf to be In this reſpect I find him greatly preferable to thoſe paſſionate lovers of whom we are ſo fond. for the heart deceives us a thouſand ways, and acts from a ſuſpicious principle, but reaſon always propoſes a juſt end, the rules of duty which it enjoins are ſure, evident, and practicable, and whenever our reaſon is led aſtray, we enter into idle ſpeculations, which were never intended to be objects of her examination.

The chief delight of Mr Wolmar, is obſervation. He loves to judge of mens characters and actions. He generally forms his judgment with great impartiality and profound penetration. If an enemy were to do him an injury, he would diſcuſs every motive and expedient with as much compoſure as if he was tranſacting any indifferent concern I do not know by what means he has heard of you, but he has often ſpoken of you with great eſteem to me, and I am ſure he is incapable of diſguiſe I have imagined ſometimes that he took particular notice of me during theſe converſations; but in all probability, the obſervation I apprehended was nothing but the ſecret reproach of an alarmed conſcience However it be, in this reſpect I did my duty neither fear nor ſhame occaſioned

caſioned me to ſhew an unjuſt reſerve, and I did you juſtice before him, as I now do him juſtice before you.

I forgot to inform you of our income, and the management of it. The wreck of Mr Wolmar's inheritance, with the addition from my father, who has only reſerved a penſion for himſelf, makes up a handſome and moderate fortune, which Mr Wolmar uſes with generoſity and diſcretion, by maintaining in his family not an inconvenient and vain diſplay of luxury, but plenty, with the real conveniences of life; and by diſtributing neceſſaries among his indigent neighbours The œconomy he has eſtabliſhed in his houſehold, is the image of that order which reigns in his own breaſt, and his little family ſeems to be a model of that regularity which is obſervable in the government of the world. You neither diſcover that inflexible formality which is rather inconvenient than uſeful, and which no one but he who exacts it can endure, nor do you perceive that miſtaken confuſion, which, by being incumbered with ſuperfluities, renders every thing uſeleſs The maſter's hand is ſeen throughout, without being felt; and he made his firſt arrangement with ſo much diſcretion, that every thing now goes on by itſelf, and regularity is preſerved, without any abridgment of liberty.

This, my worthy friend, is a ſuccinct but faithful account of Mr Wolmar's character, as far as I have been able to diſcover it ſince I lived with him Such as he appeared to me the firſt day, ſuch he ſeemed the laſt, without any alteration, which induces me to hope that I know him

him thoroughly, and that I have no farther diſcoveries to make, for I cannot conceive any change in his behaviour which will not be to his diſadvantage.

From this account, you may anticipate the anſwer to your queſtion; and you muſt think deſpicably of me not to ſuppoſe me happy, when I have ſo much reaſon to be ſo What led me into a miſtake, and what perhaps ſtill miſleads you, is the opinion, that love is neceſſary to make the married ſtate happy. My good friend, this is a vulgar error, honour, virtue, a certain conformity, not ſo much of age and condition, as of temper and inclination, are the requiſites in the conjugal ſtate · nevertheleſs, it muſt not be inferred from hence, that this union does not produce an affectionate attachment, which, though it does not amount to love, is not leſs agreeable, and is much more permanent Love is attended with a continual inquietude of jealouſy, or the dread of ſeparation, by no means ſuitable with a married life, which ſhould be a ſtate of peace and tranquillity. The intent of matrimony is not for man and wife to be always taken up with each other; but jointly to diſcharge the duties of civil ſociety, to govern their family with prudence, and educate their children with diſcretion Lovers attend to nothing but each other, they are inceſſantly engaged with each other, and all that they regard, is how to ſhew their mutual affection. But this is not enough for a married pair, who have ſo many other objects to engage their attention. There is no paſſion whatever which expoſes us to ſuch deluſion as that of love. We take its

violence

violence for a ſymptom of its duration, the heart, over-burdened with ſuch an agreeable ſenſation, extends itſelf to futurity, and while the heat of love continues, we flatter ourſelves that it is never to cool. But, on the contrary, it is conſumed by its own ardour, it glows in youth, it grows faint with decaying beauty, it is utterly extinguiſhed by the froſt of age, and ſince the beginning of the world, there never was an inſtance of two lovers who ſighed for each other when they became grey-headed. We may be aſſured, that, ſooner or later, adoration will ceaſe, then the idol which we worſhipped being demoliſhed, we reciprocally ſee each other in a true light. We look with ſurpriſe for the object on which we doated Not being able to diſcover it more, we are diſpleaſed with that which remains in its ſtead, and which our imagination often diſfigures, as much as it embelliſhed it before. "There are few people (ſays Rochefoucault) who are not aſhamed of having "loved each other when their affection is extin-"guiſhed." How much is it to be dreaded therefore, leſt theſe too lively ſenſations ſhould be ſucceeded by an irkſome ſtate of mind, leſt their decline, inſtead of ſtopping at indifference, ſhould even reach abſolute diſguſt, leſt, in ſhort, being entirely ſatiated, they, who were too paſſionately fond of each other as lovers, ſhould come to hate each other as huſband and wife! My dear friend, you always appeared amiable in my eyes, too fatally ſo for my innocence and repoſe, but I never yet ſaw you but in the character of a lover, and how do I know in what light you would have appeared when your paſ-

ſion was no more? I muſt confeſs, that when love expired, it would ſtill have left you in poſſeſſion of virtue, but is that alone ſufficient to make an union happy which the heart ought to cement? and how many virtuous men have made intolerable huſbands? In all theſe reſpects you may ſay the ſame of me.

As to Mr Wolmar, no deluſion is the foundation of our mutual liking, we ſee each other in a true light; the ſentiment which unites us is not the blind tranſport of paſſionate deſire, but a conſtant and invariable attachment between two rational people, who being deſtined to paſs the remainder of their lives together, are content with their lot, and endeavour to make themſelves mutually agreeable It ſeems as if we could not have ſuited each other better, had we been formed on purpoſe for our union. If he had had a heart as tender as mine, it is impoſſible but ſo much ſenſibility on each ſide muſt ſometimes have claſhed, and given riſe to diſagreements. If I was as compoſed as he, there would ſubſiſt too much indifference between us, which would render our union leſs pleaſing and agreeable If he did not love me, we ſhould be uneaſy together, if his love for me was too paſſionate, he would be troubleſome to me. Each of us is exactly made for the other. he inſtructs me, I enliven him the value of both is increaſed by our union, and we ſeem deſtined to form but one ſoul between us, to which he gives intelligence, and I direct the will Even his advanced age redounds to our common advantage, for with the paſſion which agitated me, it is certain, that had he been younger, I ſhould have married him

him with more unwillingneſs, and that extreme reluctance would probably have prevented the happy revolution which my mind has undergone.

My worthy friend, heaven directs the good intention of parents, and rewards the docility of children. God forbid that I ſhould with to inſult your affliction. Nothing but a ſtrong deſire of giving you the firmeſt aſſurance with reſpect to my preſent condition, could induce me to add what I am going to mention. If, with the ſentiments I formerly entertained for you, and the knowledge I have ſince acquired, I was once more free, and miſtreſs of my choice, I call that Being, who has vouchſafed to enlighten me, and who reads the bottom of my heart, to witneſs my ſincerity, when I declare, that that choice ſhould fall, not on you, but on Mr Wolmar.

It may perhaps be neceſſary, in order to complete your cure, that I ſhould inform you of what farther remains in my mind Mr Wolmar is much older than I am If, to puniſh me for my faults, heaven ſhould deprive me of a worthy huſband whom I have ſo little deſerved, it is my firm reſolution never to eſpouſe another If he has not had the good fortune to meet with a chaſte virgin, at leaſt he will leave behind him a continent widow. You know me too well, to imagine, that, after I have made this declaration, I ſhall ever recede from it.

What I have ſaid to remove your doubts, may, in ſome meaſure, ſerve to reſolve your objections againſt the confeſſion which I think it

my duty to make to my husband. He is too discreet to punish me for a mortifying step which repentance alone may atone for, and I am not more incapable of the artifice common to the women you speak of, than he is of harbouring such a suspicion. With respect to the reason you assign why such a confession is needless, it is certainly sophistical, for, though we can be under no obligation to a husband, as such, before marriage, yet that does not authorise one to pass upon him for what one really is not. I perceived this before I married him, and tho' the oath which my father extorted from me prevented me from discharging my duty in this respect, I am not the less blameable, since it is a crime to take an unjust oath, and a farther crime to keep it. But I had another reason, which my heart dared not avow, and which made me still more guilty. Thank heaven, that reason subsists no longer.

A consideration more just, and of greater weight with me, is the danger of unnecessarily disturbing the repose of a worthy man, who derives his happiness from the esteem he bears to his wife. It certainly is not now in his power to break the tie which binds us together, nor in mine to have been more worthy of his choice. Therefore, by an indiscreet confidence, I run the risque of afflicting him without any advantage, and without reaping any other benefit from my sincerity, than that of disburdening my mind of a cruel secret which heavily oppresses me. I am sensible that I shall be more composed when I have made the discovery, but perhaps he would be less happy, and it would be a bad method of making

making reparation for my faults, to prefer my own tranquillity to his

What then ſhall I do in this dilemma? Till heaven ſhall better inſtruct me in my duty, I will follow your friendly advice, I will be ſilent, conceal my failings from my huſband, and endeavour to repair them by a conduct, which may one day render me worthy of his pardon.

To begin this neceſſary reformation, you muſt conſent, my dear friend, that from this time all correſpondence between us ſhall ceaſe If Mr Wolmar had received my confeſſion, he might have determined how far we ought to gratify the ſenſations of friendſhip, and give innocent proofs of our mutual attachment, but ſince I dare not conſult him in this particular, I have learned to my coſt how far habits, the moſt juſtifiable in appearance, are capable of leading us aſtray. It is time to grow diſcreet Notwithſtanding I think my heart ſecurely fortified, yet I will no longer venture to be judge in my own cauſe, nor, now I am a wife, will I give way to the ſame preſumption which betrayed me when I was a maid. This is the laſt letter you will ever receive from me I intreat you never to write to me again Nevertheleſs, as I ſhall always continue to intereſt myſelf with the moſt tender concern for your welfare, and as my ſentiment in this reſpect is as pure as the light, I ſhould be glad to hear of you occaſionally, and to find you in poſſeſſion of that happineſs you deſerve You may write to Mrs Orbe from time to time, when you have any thing intereſting to communicate. I hope that the integrity of your

ſoul will be expreſſed in your letters. Beſides, my couſin is too virtuous and diſcreet to ſhew me any part which is not fit for my peruſal, and would not fail to ſuppreſs the correſpondence if you were capable of abuſing it

Adieu, my dear and worthy friend. If I thought that fortune could make you happy, I ſhould deſire you to go in purſuit of her, but perhaps you have reaſon to deſpiſe her, being maſter of ſuch accompliſhments as will enable you to thrive without her aſſiſtance. I would rather deſire you to ſeek after happineſs, which is the fortune of the wiſe We have ever experienced that there is no felicity without virtue but examine carefully whether the word virtue, taken in too abſtracted a ſenſe, has not more pomp than ſolidity in it; and whether it is not a term of parade, more calculated to dazzle others, than to ſatisfy ourſelves I ſhudder when I reflect, that they who ſecretly meditated adultery, ſhould dare to talk of virtue! Do you know in what ſenſe we underſtood this reſpectable epithet, which we abuſed while we were engaged in a criminal commerce? it was the impetuous paſſion with which we were mutually inflamed, that diſguiſed its tranſports under this ſacred enthuſiaſm, in order to render them more dear to us, and to hold us longer in deluſion. We were formed, I dare believe, to practiſe and cheriſh real virtue, but we were miſguided in our purſuit, and we purſued a phantom. It is now time for this deluſion to ceaſe, it is time to return to wiſdom's paths, from which we have wandered too long Nor will this return, my dear friend, be ſo difficult as you conceive. You

have

have a guide within yourself, whose directions you have disregarded, but never entirely rejected. Your mind is sound, it is attached to what is right, and if just principles sometimes forsake you, it is because you do not use your utmost efforts to maintain them. Examine your conscience thoroughly, see whether you will not discover some neglected principle, which might have served to put your actions under better regulations, to have made them more consistent with each other, and with one common object. Believe me, it is not enough that virtue is the basis of your conduct, unless that basis itself is fixed on a firm foundation. Call to your mind those Indians, who imagine the world is supported by a great elephant, that elephant by a tortoise, and when you ask them on what the tortoise rests, they can answer you no farther.

I conjure you to regard the remonstrances of friendship, and to chuse a more certain road to happiness than that which has so long misguided us. I shall incessantly pray to heaven to grant us pure felicity, and I shall never be satisfied till we both enjoy it. And, if our hearts, in spite of our endeavours, recal the errors of our youth, let the reformation they produced at least warrant the recollection, that we may say, with the ancient philosopher—"Alas! we should "have perished, if we had not been undone."

Here ends the tedious sermon I have preached to you. I shall have enough to do hereafter to preach to myself. Farewell, my amiable friend, farewell for ever! so inflexible duty decrees. but be assured that the heart of Julia can never

never forget what was ſo dear to her —— my God! what am I doing? the blotted paper will inform you. Ah! is it not excuſable to diſſolve in tenderneſs, when we bid a friend the laſt farewell?

LETTER CXIV.

To Lord B——.

YES, my Lord, I confeſs it; my ſoul is oppreſſed with the weight of life. I have long endured it as a burden, I have loſt every thing which could make it dear to me, and nothing but diſquietude remains.

I am told, however, that I am not at liberty to diſpoſe of my life, without the permiſſion of that Being from whom I received it I am ſenſible likewiſe that you have a right over it by more titles than one. Your care has twice preſerved it, and your goodneſs is its conſtant ſecurity. I will never diſpoſe of it, till I am ſatisfied that I may do it without a crime, and till I have not the leaſt hope of employing it for you

You told me that I ſhould be of uſe to you, why did you deceive me? Since we have been in London, ſo far from thinking of employing me in your concerns, you have been kind enough to make me your only concern How ſuperfluous is your obliging ſolicitude! My Lord, you know I abhor a crime, even worſe than I deteſt life, I adore the ſupreme Being, I owe every thing to you, I have an affection for you, you are the only perſon on earth to whom I am attached

tached. Friendſhip and duty may chain a wretch to this earth; ſophiſtry and vain pretences will never detain him Enlighten my underſtanding, ſpeak to my heart, I am ready to hear you, but remember, that deſpair is not to be impoſed upon

You would have me apply to the teſt of reaſon I will, let us reaſon. You deſire me to deliberate in proportion to the importance of the queſtion in debate; I agree to it. Let us inveſtigate truth with temper and moderation. Let us diſcuſs this general propoſition with the ſame indifference we would treat any other. Robeck wrote an apology for ſuicide before he put an end to his life. I will not, after his example, write a book on the ſubject, neither am I well ſatisfied with that which he has penned, but I hope, in this diſcuſſion, at leaſt to imitate his moderation

I have for a long time meditated on this awful ſubject. You muſt be ſenſible of this, for you know my deſtiny, and yet I am alive. The more I reflect, the more I am convinced that the queſtion may be reduced to this fundamental propoſition Every man has a right by nature to purſue what he thinks good, and avoid what he thinks evil, in all reſpects which are not injurious to others When our life therefore becomes a miſery to ourſelves, and is not of advantage to any one, we are at liberty to rid ourſelves of it. If there is any ſuch thing as a clear and ſelf-evident principle, I think this is one, and if this be ſubverted, there is ſcarce an action in life which may not be made a crime.

What ſay the philoſophers on this ſubject? First,

Firſt, they conſider life as ſomething which is not our own, becauſe we hold it as a gift. But becauſe it has been given to us, is it not for that very reaſon our own? Has not God given theſe ſophiſts two arms? Nevertheleſs, when they are under apprehenſions of a mortification, they do not ſcruple to amputate one, or both if there be occaſion. By a parity of reaſoning, we may convince thoſe who believe in the immortality of the ſoul, for if I ſacrifice my arm to the preſervation of ſomething more precious, which is my body, I have the ſame right to ſacrifice my body to the preſervation of ſomething more valuable, which is the happineſs of my exiſtence. If all the gifts which heaven has beſtowed are naturally deſigned for our good, they are certainly too apt to change their nature; and we are endowed with reaſon, that we may diſcern the difference. If this rule did not authoriſe us to chuſe the one and reject the other, of what uſe would it be among mankind?

This objection, ſo weak, is turned by them into a thouſand ſhapes. They conſider a man living upon earth, as a ſoldier placed on duty. "God (ſay they) has fixed you in this world, "why do you quit your ſtation without his "leave." But you, who argue thus, has he not ſtationed you in the town where you was born, why therefore do you quit it without his leave? is not miſery, of itſelf, a ſufficient permiſſion? whatever ſtation Providence has aſſigned me, whether it be in a regiment, or on the earth at large, he intended me to ſtay there while I found my ſituation agreeable, and to leave it when it became intolerable. This is the voice

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of nature, and the voice of God I agree that we muſt wait for an order, but when I die a natural death, God does not order me to quit life, he takes it from me it is by rendering life inſupportable, that he orders me to quit it In the firſt caſe, I reſiſt with all my force, in the ſecond, I have the merit of obedience.

Can you conceive that there are ſome people ſo abſurd as to arraign ſuicide as a kind of rebellion againſt Providence, by an attempt to fly from his laws? But we do not put an end to our being, in order to withdraw ourſelves from his commands, but to execute them What! does the power of God extend no farther than to my body: is there a ſpot in the univerſe, is there any being in the univerſe which is not ſubject to his power? and will that power have leſs immediate influence over me, when my being is refined, and thereby becomes leſs compound, and of nearer reſemblance to the divine eſſence? No, his juſtice and goodneſs are the foundation of my hopes, and if I thought that death would withdraw me from his power, I would no longer wiſh to die

This is one of the quibbles of the Phædo, which, in other reſpects, abounds with ſublime truths "If your ſlave deſtroys himſelf (ſays "Socrates to Cebes,) would you not puniſh "him, were it poſſible, for having unjuſtly de-"prived you of your property" But, good Socrates, do we not belong to God after we are dead? The caſe you put is not applicable, you ought to argue thus "If you incumber your "ſlave with a habit which confines him from "diſcharging his duty properly, will you pu-"niſh

"niſh him for quitting it in order to render "you better ſervice?" The grand error lies in making life of too much importance; as if our exiſtence depended upon it, and that death was a total annihilation. Our life is of no conſequence in the ſight of God, it is of no importance in the eyes of reaſon, neither ought it to be of any in our ſight, and when we quit our body, we only lay aſide an inconvenient habit Is this circumſtance ſo painful, to be the occaſion of ſo much diſturbance? my Lord, theſe declaimers are not in earneſt Their arguments are abſurd and cruel, for they aggravate the ſuppoſed crime as if it put a period to exiſtence, and they puniſh it as if that exiſtence was eternal

As to Plato's Phædo, which has furniſhed them with the only ſpecious argument that has ever been advanced, the queſtion is diſcuſſed there in a very light and deſultory manner. Socrates being condemned, by an unjuſt judgment, to loſe his life in a few hours, had no occaſion to enter into an accurate inquiry whether he was at liberty to diſpoſe of it himſelf. Suppoſing him really to have been the author of thoſe diſcourſes which Plato aſcribes to him, yet believe me, my Lord, he would have meditated with more attention on the ſubject, had he been in circumſtances which required him to reduce his ſpeculations to practice, and a ſtrong proof that no valid objection can be drawn from that immortal work againſt the right of diſpoſing of our own lives, is, that Cato read it twice thro' the very night that he deſtroyed himſelf.

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The ſame ſophiſters make it a queſtion whether life can ever be an evil? But when we conſider the multitude of errors, torments, and vices with which it abounds, one would rather be inclined to doubt whether it can ever be a bleſſing. Guilt inceſſantly beſieges the moſt virtuous of mankind Every moment he lives, he is in danger of falling a prey to the wicked, or of being wicked himſelf. To ſtruggle, and to endure, is his lot in this world; that of the diſhoneſt man is to do evil, and to ſuffer In every other particular they differ, and have nothing in common except the miſeries of life If you required authorities and facts, I could cite you the oracles of old, the anſwers of the ſages, and produce inſtances where acts of virtue were recompenſed with death. But let us leave theſe conſiderations, my Lord, it is to you whom I addreſs myſelf, and I aſk you what is the chief attention of a wiſe man in this life, except, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, to collect himſelf inwardly, and endeavour, even while he lives, to be dead to every object of ſenſe? The only way by which wiſdom directs us to avoid the miſeries of human nature, is it not to detach ourſelves from all earthly objects, from every thing that is groſs in our compoſition, to retire within ourſelves, and to raiſe our thoughts to ſublime contemplations? If therefore our paſſions and our errors are the ſource of our misfortunes, with what eagerneſs ſhould we wiſh for a ſtate which will deliver us both from the one and the other? What is the fate of thoſe ſons of ſenſuality, who indiſcreetly multiply their torments by their pleaſures? They in fact

deſtroy their exiſtence, by extending their connections in this life, they increaſe the weight of their chains by their numerous attachments, they reliſh no enjoyments but what are ſucceeded by a thouſand bitter wants, the more lively their ſenſibility, the more acute their ſufferings, the ſtronger they are attached to life, the more wretched they become.

But admitting it, in general, a benefit to mankind to crawl upon the earth with gloomy ſadneſs, I do not pretend to intimate that the human race ought with one common conſent to deſtroy themſelves, and make the world one immenſe grave. But there are miſerable beings, who are too much exalted to be governed by vulgar opinion, to them, deſpair and grievous torments are the paſſports of nature. It would be as ridiculous to ſuppoſe that life can be a bleſſing to ſuch men, as it was abſurd in the ſophiſter Poſſidonius to deny that it was an evil, at the ſame time that he endured all the torments of the gout While life is agreeable to us, we earneſtly wiſh to prolong it, and nothing but a ſenſe of extreme miſery can extinguiſh the deſire of exiſtence, for we naturally conceive a violent dread of death, and this dread conceals from our ſight the miſeries of human nature. We drag a painful and melancholy life, for a long time before we can reſolve to quit it, but when once life becomes ſo inſupportable as to overcome the horror of death, then exiſtence is evidently a great evil, and we cannot diſengage ourſelves from it too ſoon. Therefore, though we cannot exactly aſcertain the point at which it ceaſes to be a bleſſing, yet

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at leaſt we are certain that it is an evil long before it appears to be ſuch, and with every ſenſible man the right of quitting life is by a great deal precedent to the temptation

This is not all After they have denied that life can be an evil, in order to bar our right of making away with ourſelves, they confeſs immediately afterwards that it is an evil, by reproaching us with want of courage to ſupport it. According to them, it is cowardice to withdraw ourſelves from pain and trouble, and there are none but daſtards who deſtroy themſelves. O Rome, thou victrix of the world, what a race of cowards did thy empire produce! let Arria, Eponina, Lucretia, be of the number, they were women But Brutus, Caſſius, and thou great and divine Cato, who didſt ſhare with the gods the adoration of an aſtoniſhed world, thou whoſe ſacred and auguſt preſence animated the Romans with holy zeal, and made tyrants tremble, little did thy proud admirers imagine that paltry rhetoricians, immured in the dirty corner of a college, would ever attempt to prove that thou wert a coward, for having preferred death to a ſhameful exiſtence. O the dignity and energy of your modern writers! how ſublime, how intrepid are you with your pens? But tell me, thou great and valiant hero, who doſt ſo courageouſly decline the battle, in order to endure the pain of living ſomewhat longer, when a ſpark of fire lights upon your hand, why do you withdraw it in ſuch haſte? How! are you ſuch a coward that you dare not bear the ſcorching of fire? Nothing, you, ſay, can oblige you to endure the burning ſpark, and

what obliges me to endure life? Was the creation of a man of more difficulty to Providence, than that of a ſtraw? and is not both one and the other equally his work?

Without doubt, it is an evidence of great fortitude to bear with firmneſs the miſery which we cannot ſhun, none but a fool, however, will voluntarily endure evils which he can avoid without a crime, and it is very often a great crime to ſuffer pain unneceſſarily. He who has not reſolution to deliver himſelf from a miſerable being by a ſpeedy death, is like one who would rather ſuffer a wound to mortify, than truſt to the ſurgeon's knife for his cure. Come, thou worthy,———cut off this leg, which endangers my life I will ſee it done without ſhrinking, and will give that hero leave to call me coward, who ſuffers his leg to mortify, becauſe he dares not undergo the ſame operation.

I acknowledge that there are duties owing to others, the nature of which will not allow every man to diſpoſe of his life, but in return, how many are there which give him a right to diſpoſe of it? Let a magiſtrate on whom the welfare of a nation depends, let a father of a family who is bound to procure ſubſiſtence for his children, let a debtor who might ruin his creditors, let theſe at all events diſcharge their duty, admitting a thouſand other civil and domeſtic relations to oblige an honeſt and unfortunate man to ſupport the miſery of life, to avoid the greater evil of doing injuſtice is it therefore, under circumſtances totally different, incumbent on us to preſerve a life oppreſſed with a ſwarm of miſeries, when it can be of no ſervice

but

but to him who has not courage to die! "Kill me, my child," ſays the decrepid ſavage to his ſon, who carries him on his ſhoulders, and bends under his weight, "the enemy is at "hand, go to battle with thy brethren, go "and preſerve thy children, and do not ſuffer "thy helpleſs father to fall alive into the hands "of thoſe whoſe relations he has mangled" Though hunger, ſickneſs, and poverty, thoſe domeſtic plagues, more dreadful than ſavage enemies, may allow a wretched cripple to conſume, in a ſick bed, the proviſions of a family which can ſcarce ſubſiſt itſelf, yet he who has no connections, whom heaven has reduced to the neceſſity of living alone, whoſe wretched exiſtence can be productive of good to no one, why ſhould not he, at leaſt, have the right of quitting a ſtation where his complaints are troubleſome, and his ſufferings of no utility?

Weigh theſe conſiderations, my Lord, collect theſe arguments, and you will find that they may be reduced to the moſt ſimple of nature's rights, of which no man of ſenſe yet ever entertained a doubt. In fact, why ſhould we be allowed to cure ourſelves of the gout, and not to get rid of the miſery of life? do not both evils proceed from the ſame hand? To what purpoſe is it to ſay, that death is painful? Are drugs agreeable to be taken? No, nature revolts againſt both. Let them prove therefore that it is more juſtifiable to cure a tranſient diſorder by the application of remedies, than to free ourſelves from an incurable evil by putting an end to life, and let them ſhew how it can be leſs criminal to uſe the bark for a fever, than to

take opium for the ſtone. If we conſider the object in view, it is in both caſes to free ourſelves from painful ſenſations; if we regard the means, both one and the other are equally natural; if we conſider the repugnance of our nature, it operates equally on both ſides; if we attend to the will of Providence, can we ſtruggle againſt any evil of which it is not the author? can we deliver ourſelves from any torment which the hand of God has not inflicted? what are the bounds which limit his power, and when is reſiſtance lawful? Are we then to make no alteration in the condition of things, becauſe every thing is in the ſtate he appointed? muſt we do nothing in this life for fear of infringing his laws, or is it in our power to break them if we would? No, my Lord, the occupation of man is more great and noble God did not give him life that he ſhould ſupinely remain in a ſtate of conſtant inactivity But he gave him freedom to act, conſcience to will, and reaſon to chuſe what is good. He has conſtituted him ſole judge of all his actions. He has engraved this precept in his heart, Do whatever you conceive to be for your own good, provided you thereby do no injury to others. If my ſenſations tell me that death is eligible, I reſiſt his orders by an obſtinate reſolution to live; for, by making death deſirable, he directs me to embrace it.

My Lord, I appeal to your wiſdom and candour, what more infallible maxims can reaſon deduce from religion, with reſpect to ſuicide? If Chriſtians have adopted contrary tenets, they are neither drawn from the principles of religion,

on, nor from the only ſure guide the Scriptures, but borrowed from the pagan philoſophers. Lactantius and Auguſtine, the firſt who propagated this new doctrine, of which Jeſus Chriſt and his apoſtles take no notice, ground their arguments entirely on the reaſoning of Phædo, which I have already controverted; ſo that the believers, who, in this reſpect, think they are ſupported by the authority of the goſpel, are in fact only countenanced by the authority of Plato. In truth, where do we find throughout the whole Bible any law againſt ſuicide, or ſo much as a bare diſapprobation of it, and is it not very unaccountable, that among the inſtances produced of perſons who devoted themſelves to death, we do not find the leaſt word of improbation againſt examples of this kind? Nay, what is more, the inſtance of Samſon's voluntary death is authoriſed by a miracle, by which he revenges himſelf of his enemies. Would this miracle have been diſplayed to juſtify a crime, and would this man who loſt his ſtrength, by ſuffering himſelf to be ſeduced by the allurements of a woman, have recovered it to commit an authoriſed crime, as if God himſelf would practiſe deceit on his creatures?

"Thou ſhalt do no murder," ſays the decalogue. What are we to infer from this? If this commandment is to be taken literally, we muſt not deſtroy malefactors, nor our enemies. and Moſes, who put ſo many people to death, was a bad interpreter of his own precept. If there are any exceptions, certainly the firſt muſt be in favour of ſuicide; becauſe it is exempt from any degree of violence and injuſtice, the two only

only circumſtances which can make homicide criminal, and becauſe nature, moreover, has in this reſpect thrown ſufficient obſtacles in the way

But ſtill, they tell us, we muſt patiently endure the evils which God inflicts, and make a merit of our ſufferings This application however of the maxims of Chriſtianity is very ill calculated to ſatisfy our judgment. Man is ſubject to a thouſand troubles, his life is a complication of evils, and he ſeems to have been born only to ſuffer. Reaſon directs him to ſhun as many of theſe evils as he can avoid, and religion, which is never in contradiction to reaſon, approves of his endeavours But how inconſiderable is the account of theſe evils, in compariſon with thoſe he is obliged to endure againſt his will? It is with reſpect to theſe, that a merciful God allows man to claim the merit of reſiſtance, he receives the tribute he has been pleaſed to impoſe, as a voluntary homage, and he places our reſignation in this life to our profit in the next. True repentance is derived from nature. if man endures patiently whatever he is obliged to ſuffer, he does, in this reſpect, all that God requires of him, and if any one is ſo inflated with pride, as to attempt more, he is a madman who ought to be confined, or an impoſtor who ought to be puniſhed Let us therefore, without ſcruple, fly from all the evils we can avoid; there will ſtill be too many left for us to endure. Let us, without remorſe, quit life itſelf when it becomes a torment to us, ſince it is in our own power to do it, and that in ſo doing we neither offend God nor man. If we would

would offer a ſacrifice to the ſupreme Being, is it nothing to undergo death? Let us devote to God that which he demands by the voice of reaſon, and into his hands let us peaceably ſurrender our ſouls

Such are the liberal precepts which good ſenſe dictates to every man, and which religion authoriſes * Let us apply theſe precepts to ourſelves. You have condeſcended to diſcloſe your mind to me, I am acquainted with your uneaſineſs: you do not endure leſs than myſelf; your troubles, like mine, are incurable, and they are the more ſo, as the laws of honour are more immutable than thoſe of fortune You bear them, I muſt confeſs, with fortitude Virtue ſupports you, advance but one ſtep farther, and ſhe diſengages you You intreat me to ſuffer, my Lord, I dare importune you to

* A ſtrange letter this for the diſcuſſion of ſuch a ſubject! Do men argue ſo coolly on a queſtion of this nature, when they examine it on their own accounts? Is the letter a forgery, or does the author reaſon only with an intent to be refuted What makes our opinion in this particular dubious is the example of Robeck, which he cites, and which ſeems to warrant his own Robeck deliberated ſo gravely that he had patience to write a book, a large, voluminous, weighty, and diſpaſſionate book, and when he had concluded, according to his principles, that it was lawful to put an end to our being, he deſtroyed himſelf with the ſame compoſure that he wrote Let us beware of the prejudices of the times, and of particular countries When ſuicide is out of faſhion we conclude that none but madmen deſtroy themſelves, all the efforts of courage appear chimerical to daſtardly minds, every one judges of others by himſelf Nevertheleſs, how many inſtances are there, well atteſted of men, in every other reſpect perfectly ſenſible, who without remorſe, rage, or deſpair, have quitted life for no other reaſon than becauſe it was a burden to them, and have died with more compoſure than they lived!

to put an end to your ſufferings, and I leave you to judge which of us is moſt dear to the other.

Why ſhould we delay doing that which we muſt do at laſt? Shall we wait till old age and decrepid baſeneſs attach us to life, after they have robbed it of its charms, and till we are doomed to drag a crazed and infirm body with labour, ignominy, and pain? We are at an age when the ſoul has vigour to diſengage itſelf with eaſe from its ſhackles, and when a man knows how to die as he ought, when farther advanced in years, he ſuffers himſelf to be torn from life, which he quits with reluctance. Let us take advantage of this time when the tedium of life makes death deſirable, and let us tremble for fear it ſhould come in all its horrors, at the moment when we could wiſh to avoid it. I remember the time when I prayed to heaven only for a ſingle hour of life, and when I ſhould have died in deſpair if it had not been granted. Ah! what a pain it is to burſt aſunder the ties which attach our hearts to this world, and how wiſe it is to quite life the moment they are broken! I am ſenſible, my Lord, that we are both worthy of a purer manſion, virtue points it out, and deſtiny invites us to ſeek it. May the friendſhip which unites us preſerve our union to the laſt hour! O what a pleaſure for two ſincere friends voluntarily to end their days in each other's arms, to intermingle their laſt breath, and at the ſame inſtant to give up their ſoul which they ſhared in common! What pain, what regret can infect their laſt moments? what do they quit by taking

taking leave of the world? They go together, they quit nothing.

LETTER CXV.

The ANSWER.

A BLIND paſſion, young man, diſtracts thee: be more diſcreet, do not pretend to give counſel, whilſt thou ſtandeſt ſo much in need of advice. I have known greater evils than yours. I am armed with fortitude of mind, I am an Engliſhman, and not afraid to die, but I know how to live and ſuffer as becomes a man. I have ſeen death near at hand, and have viewed it with too much indifference to go in ſearch of it. But let us ſpeak to yourſelf.

It is true, I thought you might be of uſe to me, my affection ſtood in need of yours: your endeavours might have been ſerviceable to me; your underſtanding might have enlightened me in the moſt important concern of my life. If I do not avail myſelf of it, whom are you to impute it to? Where is it? what is become of it? what are you capable of? of what uſe can you be in your preſent condition? what ſervice can I expect from you? A ſenſeleſs grief renders you ſtupid and unconcerned. Thou art no man, thou art nothing, and if I did not conſider what thou *mighteſt be*, I cannot conceive any thing more abject than what thou *art*.

I need adduce no other proof than your letter itſelf. Formerly I could diſcover in you good ſenſe and truth. Your ſentiments were juſt, your

your reflections proper, and I liked you not only from judgment but choice; for I considered your influence as an additional motive to excite me to the ſtudy of wiſdom. But what do I perceive now in the arguments of your letter, with which you appear to be ſo highly ſatisfied? A wretched and perpetual ſophiſtry, which in the erroneous deviations of your reaſon ſhews the diſorder of your mind, and which I would not ſtoop to refute, if I did not commiſerate your delirium.

To ſubvert all your reaſoning with one word, I would only aſk you a ſingle queſtion. You who believe in the exiſtence of a God, in the immortality of the ſoul, and in the free-will of man, you ſurely cannot ſuppoſe that an intelligent being is embodied, and ſtationed on the earth by accident, only to exiſt, to ſuffer, and to die. It is certainly moſt probable that the life of man is not without ſome deſign, ſome end, ſome moral object. I intreat you to give me a direct anſwer to this point, after which we will deliberately examine your letter, and you will bluſh to have written it.

But let us lay aſide all general maxims, about which we often hold violent diſputes, without adopting any of them in practice, for in their application we always find ſome particular circumſtances which makes ſuch an alteration in the ſtate of things that every one thinks himſelf diſpenſed from ſubmitting to the rules which he preſcribes to others, and it is well known, that every man who eſtabliſhes general principles deems them obligatory on all the world, himſelf excepted

cepted Once more let us ſpeak to you in particular.

You believe that you have a right to put an end to your being. Your proof is of a very ſingular nature; "becauſe I am diſpoſed to die, "ſay you, I have a right to deſtroy myſelf." This is certainly a very convenient argument for villains of all kinds they ought to be very thankful to you for the arms with which you have furniſhed them, there can be no crimes, which, according to your arguments, may not be juſtified by the temptation to perpetrate them, and as ſoon as the impetuoſity of paſſion ſhall prevail over the horror of guilt, their diſpoſition to do evil will be conſidered as a right to commit it

Is it lawful for you therefore to quit life? I ſhould be glad to know whether you have yet begun to live? What! was you placed here on earth to do nothing in this world? did not heaven, when it gave you exiſtence, give you ſome talk or employment? If you have accompliſhed your day's work before evening, reſt yourſelf for the remainder of the day; you have a right to do it, but let us ſee your work. What anſwer are you prepared to make to the ſupreme Judge, when he demands an account of your time? Tell me, what can you ſay to him?—— "I have ſeduced a virtuous girl, I have forſa-"ken a friend in his diſtreſs." Thou unhappy wretch! point out to me that juſt man who can boaſt that he has lived long enough, let me learn from him in what manner I ought to have ſpent my life to be at liberty to quit it.

You enumerate the evils of human nature. You are not aſhamed to exhauſt common-place topics, which have been hackneyed over a hundred times, and you conclude that life is an evil. But ſearch, examine into the order of things, and ſee whether you can find any good which is not intermingled with evil. Does it therefore follow that there is no good in the univerſe? and can you confound what is in its own nature evil, with that which is only an evil accidentally? You have confeſſed yourſelf, that the tranſitory and paſſive life of man is of no conſequence, and only bears reſpect to matter from which he will ſoon be diſencumbered; but his active and moral life, which ought to have moſt influence over his nature, conſiſts in the exerciſe of free-will. Life is an evil to a wicked man in proſperity, and a bleſſing to an honeſt man in diſtreſs for it is not its caſual modification, but its relation to ſome final object, which makes it either good or bad. After all, what are theſe cruel torments which force you to abandon life? Do you imagine, that under your affected impartiality in the enumeration of the evils of this life, I did not diſcover that you was aſhamed to ſpeak of your own? Truſt me, and do not at once abandon every virtue. Preſerve at leaſt your wonted ſincerity, and ſpeak thus openly to your friend; "I have loſt all hope "of ſeducing a modeſt woman, I am obliged "therefore to be a man of virtue, I had much "rather die"

You are weary of living; and you tell me, that life is an evil Sooner or later, you will receive conſolation, and then you will ſay, Life

is

is a bleſſing. You will ſpeak with more truth, though not with better reaſon, for nothing will have altered but yourſelf. Begin the alteration then from this day; and ſince all the evil you lament is in the diſpoſition of your own mind, correct your irregular appetites, and do not ſet your houſe on fire to avoid the trouble of putting it in order.

I endure miſery, ſay you is it in my power to avoid ſuffering? But this is changing the ſtate of the queſtion: for the ſubject of inquiry is not whether you ſuffer, but whether your life is an evil? Let us proceed You are wretched, you naturally endeavour to extricate yourſelf from miſery. Let us ſee whether, for that purpoſe, it is neceſſary to die.

Let us for a moment examine the natural tendency of the afflictions of the mind, as in direct oppoſition to the evils of the body, the two ſubſtances being of contrary natures. The latter become worſe and more inveterate the longer they continue, and at length utterly deſtroy this mortal machine. The former, on the contrary, being only external and tranſitory modifications of an immortal and uncompounded eſſence, are inſenſibly effaced, and leave the mind in its original form, which is not ſuſceptible of alteration. Grief, diſquietude, regret, and deſpair, are evils of ſhort duration, which never take root in the mind, and experience always falſifies that bitter reflection, which makes us imagine our miſery will have no end I will go farther I cannot imagine that the vices which contaminate us, are more inherent in our nature than the troubles we endure: I not only believe that

they perish with the body which gives them birth, but I think, beyond all doubt, that a longer life would be sufficient to reform mankind, and that many ages of youth would teach us that nothing is preferable to virtue.

However this may be, as the greatest part of our physical evils are incessantly increasing, the acute pains of the body, when they are incurable, may justify a man's destroying himself, for all his faculties being distracted with pain, and the evil being without remedy, he has no longer any use either of his will or of his reason, he ceases to be a man before he is dead, and does nothing more in taking away his life, than quit a body which incumbers him, and in which his soul is no longer resident.

But it is not thus with the afflictions of the mind, which, let them be ever so acute, always carry their remedy with them. In fact, what is it that makes any evil intolerable? nothing but its duration. The operations of surgery are generally much more painful than the disorders they cure: but the pain occasioned by the latter is lasting, that of the operation is momentary, and therefore preferable. What occasion is there therefore for any operation to remove troubles which die of course by their duration, the only circumstance which could render them insupportable? Is it reasonable to apply such desperate remedies to evils which expire of themselves? To a man who values himself on his fortitude, and who estimates years at their real value, of two ways by which he may extricate himself from the same troubles, which will appear preferable, death or time? Have patience,

and

and you will be cured. What would you deſire more?

"Oh! (you will ſay,) it doubles my afflic-"tions to reflect that they will ceaſe at laſt!" This is the vain ſophiſtry of grief! an apothegm void of reaſon, of propriety, and perhaps of ſincerity. What an abſurd motive of deſpair is the hope of terminating miſery*! Even allowing this fantaſtical reflection, who would not chuſe to increaſe the preſent pain for a moment, under the aſſurance of putting an end to it, as we ſcarify a wound in order to heal it? and admitting any charm in grief, to make us in love with ſuffering, when we releaſe ourſelves from it by putting an end to our being, do we not at that inſtant incur all that we apprehend hereafter?

Reflect thoroughly, young man, what are ten, twenty, thirty years, in competition with immortality? Pain and pleaſure paſs like a ſhadow, life ſlides away in an inſtant, it is nothing of itſelf, its value depends on the uſe we make of it. The good that we have done is all that remains, it is that alone which conſtitutes its worth.

Do not, therefore, ſay any more that your exiſtence is an evil, ſince it depends upon yourſelf to make it a bleſſing, and if it be an evil to have lived, this is an additional reaſon for prolonging life. Do not pretend neither to ſay

* No, my Lord, we do not put an end to miſery by theſe means, but rather fill the meaſure of affliction, by burſting aſunder the laſt ties which attach us to felicity. When we regret what was dear to us, grief itſelf ſtill attaches us to the object we lament, which is a ſtate leſs deplorable than to be attached to nothing.

any more that you are at liberty to die, for it is as much as to ſay that you have power to alter your nature, that you have a right to revolt againſt the Author of your being, and to fruſtrate the end of your exiſtence. But when you add, that your death does injury to no one, do you recollect that you make this declaration to your friend?

Your death does injury to no one? I underſtand you! You think the loſs I ſhall ſuſtain by your death of no importance, you deem my affliction of no conſequence. I will urge to you no more the rights of friendſhip which you deſpiſe; but are there not obligations ſtill more dear*, which ought to induce you to preſerve your life? If there be a perſon in the world who loved you to that degree as to be unwilling to ſurvive you, and whoſe happineſs depends on yours, do you think that you have no obligations to her? Will not the execution of your wicked deſign diſturb the peace of a mind, which has been, with ſuch difficulty, reſtored to its former innocence? Are not you afraid to add freſh torments to a heart of ſuch ſenſibility? Are not you apprehenſive leſt your death ſhould be attended with a loſs more fatal, which would deprive the world and virtue itſelf of its brighteſt ornament? And if ſhe ſhould ſurvive you, are not you afraid to rouſe up remorſe in her boſom, which is more grievous to ſupport than life itſelf! Thou ungrateful friend! thou indelicate

* Obligations more dear than thoſe of friendſhip! Is it a philoſopher who talks thus! But this affected ſopniſt was himſelf of an amorous diſpoſition

licate lover! Wilt thou always be taken up wholly with thyſelf? Wilt thou always think on thy own troubles alone? Haſt thou no regard for the happineſs of one who was ſo dear to thee? And cannot thou reſolve to live for her who was willing to die with thee?

You talk of the duties of a magiſtrate, and of a father of a family, and becauſe you are not under thoſe circumſtances, you think yourſelf abſolutely free. And are you then under no obligations to ſociety, to whom you are indebted for your preſervation, your talents, your underſtanding? Do you owe nothing to your native country, and to thoſe unhappy people who may need your aſſiſtance? O what an acurate calculation you make! among the obligations you have enumerated, you have only omitted thoſe of a man and of a citizen. Where is the virtuous patriot, who refuſed to enliſt under a foreign prince, becauſe his blood ought not to be ſpilt but in the ſervice of his country, and who now, in a fit of deſpair, is ready to ſhed it againſt the expreſs prohibition of the laws? The laws, the laws, young man! did any wiſe man ever deſpiſe them? Socrates, though innocent, out of regard to them refuſed to quit his priſon. You do not ſcruple to violate them by quitting life unjuſtly, and you aſk, what injury do I?

You endeavour to juſtify yourſelf by example. You preſume to mention the Romans. You talk of the Romans! it becomes you indeed to cite thoſe illuſtrious names. Tell me, did Brutus die a lover in deſpair, and did Cato plunge the dagger in his breaſt for his miſtreſs? Thou weak and abject man! what reſemblance is there between

between Cato and thee? Shew me the common ſtandard between that ſublime ſoul and thine Ah, hold thy peace, raſh wretch! I am afraid to profane his name by a vindication of his conduct. At that auguſt and ſacred name every friend to virtue ſhould bow to the ground, and ſilently honour the memory of the greateſt and moſt virtuous of men.

How ill choſen are your examples! and how meanly you judge of the Romans, if you imagine that they thought themſelves at liberty to quit life ſo ſoon as it became a burden to them Recur to the excellent days of that republic, and ſee whether you will find a ſingle citizen of virtue, who thus freed himſelf from the diſcharge of his duty even after the moſt cruel misfortunes. When Regulus was on his return to Carthage, did he prevent the torments which he knew were preparing for him, by deſtroying himſelf? What would not Poſthumus have given, when obliged to paſs under the yoke at Caudium, had this reſource been juſtifiable? How much did even the ſenate admire that effort of courage, which enabled the conſul Varro to ſurvive his defeat? For what reaſon did ſo many generals voluntarily ſurrender themſelves to their enemies, they to whom ignominy was ſo dreadful, and who were ſo little afraid of dying? It was becauſe they conſidered their blood, their life, and their lateſt breath, as devoted to their country, and neither ſhame nor misfortune could diſſuade them from this ſacred duty. But when the laws were ſubverted, and the ſtate became a prey to tyranny, the citizens reſumed their natural liberty, and the right they had o-

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ver their own lives. When Rome was no more, it was lawful for the Romans to give up their lives, they had diſcharged their duties on earth, they had no longer any country to defend, they were therefore at liberty to diſpoſe of their lives, and to obtain that freedom for themſelves which they could not recover for their country. After having employed their days in the ſervice of expiring Rome, and in fighting for its laws, they died virtuous and great as they had lived; and their death was an additional tribute to the glory of the Roman name, ſince none of them beheld a ſight above all others moſt diſhonourable, that of a true citizen ſtooping to an uſurper.

But thou, what art thou? what haſt thou done? doeſt thou think to excuſe thyſelf on account of thy obſcurity? does thy weakneſs exempt thee from thy duty, and becauſe thou haſt neither rank nor diſtinction in thy country, art thou leſs ſubject to its laws? It well becomes you indeed to preſume to talk of dying, while you owe the ſervice of your life to your equals. Know, that a death, ſuch as you meditate, is ſhameful and ſurreptitious It is a theft committed on mankind in general Before you quit life, return the benefits you have received from every individual "But (ſay you) I have no "attachments, I am uſeleſs in the world." O thou young philoſopher! art thou ignorant that thou canſt not move a ſingle ſtep without finding ſome duty to fulfil, and that every man is uſeful to ſociety, even by means of his exiſtence alone?

Hear me, fooliſh youth thou art dear to me. I commiſerate thy errors. If there ſtill remains

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in thy breaſt the leaſt ſenſe of virtue, attend, and let me teach thee to be reconciled to life Whenever thou art tempted to quit it, ſay to thyſelf——"Let me at leaſt do one good action "before I die" Then go in ſearch for one in a ſtate of indigence, whom thou mayeſt relieve, for one under misfortunes, whom thou mayeſt comfort; for one under oppreſſion, whom thou mayeſt defend Introduce to me thoſe unhappy wretches whom my rank keeps at a diſtance. Do not be afraid of miſuſing my purſe, or my credit make free with them; diſtribute my fortune, make me rich. If this conſideration reſtrains you to-day, it will reſtrain you to-morrow, if to-morrow, it will reſtrain you next day, it will reſtrain you all your life. If it has not the power to reſtrain you, die! you are indeed unfit to live

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LETTER CXVI.

From Lord B——.

MY dear friend, I cannot embrace you to-day, as I was in hopes I ſhould, being detained two days longer at Kenſington. It is the way of the court to be very buſy in doing nothing, and all affairs run in a conſtant ſucceſſion without being diſpatched. The buſineſs which has confined me here eight days, might have been done in two hours, but as the chief concern of the miniſtry is to preſerve an air of buſineſs, they waſte more time in putting me off than it would coſt them to diſpatch me My impatience,

tience, which is rather too evident, does not contribute to ſhorten the delay You know that the court is not ſuited to my turn, I find it more intolerable ſince we have lived together, and I had rather a hundred times ſhare your melancholy than be peſtered with the knaves which abound in this country

Mean time, in converſing with theſe buſy ſluggards, a thought ſtruck me with regard to you, and I only wait your conſent to diſpoſe of you to advantage. I perceive, that, in ſtruggling with your affliction, you ſuffer both from your uneaſineſs of mind, and from your reſiſtance. If you are determined to live and overcome it, you have formed this reſolution leſs in conformity to the dictates of reaſon and honour than in compliance with your friends. But this is not enough. you muſt recover the reliſh of life, to diſcharge its duties as you ought, for with ſo much indifference about every thing, you will ſucceed in nothing. We may both of us talk as we will, but reaſon alone will never reſtore you to your reaſon. It is neceſſary that a multiplicity of new and ſtriking objects ſhould in ſome meaſure withdraw you from that attention which your mind fixes ſolely on one object of its affections. To recover yourſelf, you muſt be detached from inward reflection, and nothing but the agitation of a buſy life can reſtore you to ſerenity.

An opportunity offers for this purpoſe, which is not to be diſregarded, a great and noble enterpriſe is on foot, and ſuch an one as has not been equalled for ages. It depends on you to be a ſpectator and aſſiſtant in it You will ſee the

the grandeſt ſight which the eye of man ever beheld, and your turn for obſervation will be abundantly gratified. Your appointment will be honourable, and, with the talents you are maſter of, will only require courage and good health You will find it attended with more danger than confinement, which will make it more agreeable to you; and, in few words, your engagement will not be for any long time. I cannot give you farther information at preſent, becauſe this ſcheme, which is almoſt ripe for diſcovery, is nevertheleſs a ſecret with which I am not yet acquainted in all its particulars. I will only add, that if you decline this lucky and extraordinary opportunity, you will probably never recover it again, and will regret it as long as you live.

I have ordered my ſervant, who is the bearer of this letter, to find you out wherever you are, and not to return without a line, for the affair requires diſpatch, and I muſt give an anſwer before I depart hence.

LETTER CXVII.

The ANSWER.

DO, my Lord, diſpoſe of me. Whatever you propoſe, ſhall be complied with. Till I am worthy to ſerve you, let me at leaſt claim the merit of obedience to your will.

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LETTER CXVIII

From Lord B——

SINCE you approve of the thought which occurred to me, I will not delay a minute to acquaint you that every thing is concluded, and to explain to you the nature of the engagement I have entered into, in purſuance of the authority you gave me to make the agreement on your behalf.

You know that a ſquadron of five men of war is equipped at Plymouth, and that they are ready to ſet ſail. The commodore is Mr George Anſon, a brave and experienced officer, and an old friend of mine. It is deſtined for the South-ſea, whither it is to ſail through the ſtraits of Le Maire, and to come back by the Eaſt-Indies. You ſee therefore that the object is no leſs than to make the tour of the world, an expedition which, it is imagined, will take up three years I could have entered you as a volunteer; but to give you more importance among the crew, I have obtained the addition of a title for you, and you ſtand on the liſt in quality of engineer of the land-forces this will be more ſuitable to you, becauſe, having followed the bent of your genius from your firſt outſet in the world, I know you made it your early ſtudy

I propoſe to return to London to-morrow, to preſent you to Mr Anſon within two days In the mean time, take care to get your equipage ready, and provide yourſelf with books and inſtruments, for the embarkation is ready, and

only waits for ſailing orders. My dear friend, I hope that God will bring you back from this long voyage in full health of mind and body, and that at your return we ſhall meet never to be ſeparated more

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LETTER CXIX.

To Mrs ORBE

I AM preparing, my dear and lovely couſin, to make the tour of the world, I go to ſeek, in another hemiſphere, that peace which I could not enjoy in this. Fool that I am! I am going to wander over the univerſe, without being able to find one place where my heart can reſt I am going to find a retreat from the world, where I may be far from you. But it becomes me to regard the will of a friend, a beneſactor, a father. Without the ſmalleſt hopes of a cure, at leaſt I will take pains for it, ſince Julia and virtue ſo ordain it. In three hours time I ſhall be at the mercy of the elements, in three days I ſhall loſe ſight of Europe; in three months I ſhall be in unknown ſeas, raging with perpetual tempeſts, in three years perhaps . . How dreadful is the thought of never ſeeing you more! Alas! the greateſt danger is in my own breaſt; for whatever may be my fate, I am reſolved, I ſwear, that you ſhall ſee me worthy to appear in your ſight, or you ſhall never ſee me more.

Lord B——, who is on his return to Rome, will deliver this letter in his way, and acquaint you

you with all particulars concerning me You are acquainted with his diſpoſition, and you will eaſily gueſs at thoſe circumſtances which he does not chuſe to communicate You was once no ſtranger to mine, therefore you may likewiſe form ſome judgment of thoſe things which I do not care to relate myſelf.

Your friend, I hear, has the happineſs to be a mother as well as yourſelf Ought ſhe then to be O inexorable heaven! . . O *my* mother! why did heaven in its wrath grant you a ſon? . .

I muſt conclude. I feel that I muſt. Farewell, ye pure and celeſtial ſouls! farewell, ye tender and inſeparable friends, the beſt women on earth! Each of you is the only object worthy of the other's affections May you mutually contribute to each other's happineſs! Deign now and then to call to mind the memory of an unfortunate wretch, who only exiſted to ſhare with you every ſentiment of his ſoul, and who ceaſed to live the moment he was divided from you. If ever—— . I hear the ſignal, and the ſhouts of the ſailors The wind blows freſh, and the ſails are ſpread. I muſt on board: I muſt be gone Thou vaſt and immenſe ſea, which perhaps wilt bury me beneath thy waves! O that upon thy ſwelling ſurge I could recover that calm which has forſaken my troubled ſoul!

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LETTER CXX.

From Mrs WOLMAR *to Mrs* ORBE.

HOW tedious is your ſtay! This going backward and forward is very diſagreeable How many hours are loſt before you return to the place where you ought to remain for ever, and therefore how much worſe is it for you ever to go away! The idea of ſeeing you for ſo ſhort a time, takes from the pleaſure of your company Do not you perceive, that by reſiding at your own houſe and mine alternately, you are in fact at home in neither, and cannot you contrive ſome means by which you may make your abode in both at once?

What are we doing, my dear couſin? How many precious moments we loſe, when we have none to waſte! Years ſteal upon us, youth begins to vaniſh, life ſlides away imperceptibly, its momentary bliſs is in our poſſeſſion, and we refuſe to enjoy it! Do you recollect the time when we were yet girls, thoſe early days ſo agreeable and delightful, which no other time of life affords, and which the mind with ſo much difficulty forgets? How often, when obliged to part for a few days, or even for a few hours, have we ſadly embraced each other, and vowed, that when we were our own miſtreſſes, we ſhould never be aſunder? We are now our own miſtreſſes, and yet we paſs one half of the year at a diſtance from each other Is then our affection weaker? My dear and tender friend, we are both ſenſible how much time, habit, and your kindneſs, have

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rendered our attachment more ſtrong and indiſſoluble As to myſelf, your abſence daily becomes more inſupportable, and I can no longer live for a moment without you. The progreſs of our friendſhip is more natural than it appears to be; it is founded, not only on a ſimilarity of character, but of condition As we advance in years, our affections begin to centre in one point We every day loſe ſomething that was dear to us, which we can never replace. Thus we periſh by degrees, till at length, being wholly devoted to ſelf-love, we loſe life and ſenſibility, even before our exiſtence ceaſes. But a ſuſceptible mind arms itſelf with all its force againſt this anticipated death. when a chillneſs begins to ſeize the extremities, it collects all the genial warmth of nature round its own centre, the more connections it loſes, the cloſer it cleaves to thoſe which remain, and all its former ties are combined to attach it to the laſt object

This is what, young as I am, I ſeem to experience. Ah! my dear, my poor heart has been too ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions! It was ſo early exhauſted, that it grew old before its time, and ſo many different affections have abſorbed it to that degree, that it has no room for any new attachments. You have known me in the ſucceſſive capacities of a daughter, a friend, a miſtreſs, a wife, and a mother - You know how every character has been dear to me! Some of theſe connections are utterly deſtroyed, others are weakened. My mother, my affectionate mother, is no more, tears are the only tribute I can pay to her memory, and I do but half enjoy the moſt agreeable ſenſations of nature As

to love, it is wholly extinguiſhed, it is dead for ever, and has left a vacancy in my heart, which will never be filled up again. We have loſt your good and worthy huſband, whom I loved as the dear half of yourſelf, and who was ſo well deſerving of your friendſhip and tenderneſs If my boys were grown up, maternal affection might ſupply theſe vacancies; but that affection, like all others, has need of participation, and what return can a mother expect from a child only four or five years old? Our children are dear to us, long before they are ſenſible of our love, or capable of returning it, and yet, how much we want to expreſs the extravagance of our fondneſs, to ſome one who can enter into our affection! My huſband loves them, but not with that degree of ſenſibility I could wiſh he is not intoxicated with fondneſs, as I am, his tenderneſs for them is too rational; I would have it to be more lively, and more like my own. In ſhort, I want a friend, a mother, who can be as extravagantly fond of my children, and her own, as myſelf. In a word, the fondneſs of a mother makes the company of a friend more neceſſarily to me, that I may enjoy the pleaſure of talking continually about my children, without being troubleſome. I feel double the pleaſure in the careſſes of my little Marcellinus, when I ſee that you ſhare it with me. When I embrace your daughter, I fancy that I preſs you to my boſom We have obſerved a hundred times, on ſeeing our little cherubs at play together, that the union of our affections has ſo united them, that we have not been able to diſtinguiſh to which of us they ſeverally belonged

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This is not all. I have powerful reaſons for deſiring to have you always near me, and your abſence is painful to me in more reſpects than one Think on my averſion to all hypocriſy, and reflect on the continual reſerve in which I have lived upwards of ſix years towards the man whom I love above all others in the world My odious ſecret oppreſſes me more and more, and my duty to reveal it ſeems every day more indiſpenſable The more I am prompted by honour to diſcloſe it, the more I am obliged by prudence to conceal it. Conſider what a horrid ſtate it is for a wife to carry miſtruſt, falſehood, and fear, even to her huſband's arms, to be afraid of opening her heart to him who is maſter of it, and to conceal one half of my life to inſure the peace of the other? Good God! from whom do I conceal my ſecret thoughts, and hide the receſſes of a ſoul with which he has ſo much reaſon to be ſatisfied? From my Wolmar, my huſband, and the moſt worthy huſband with which heaven ever rewarded the virtue of unſullied chaſtity. Having deceived him once, I am obliged to continue the deceit, and bear the mortification of finding myſelf unworthy of all the kindneſs he expreſſes My heart is afraid to receive any teſtimony of his eſteem, his moſt tender careſſes make me bluſh, and my conſcience interprets all his marks of reſpect and attention into ſymptoms of reproach and diſdain. It is a cruel pain conſtantly to harbour this remorſe, which tells me, that he miſtakes the object of his eſteem. Ah! if he but knew me, he would not uſe me thus tenderly! No, I cannot endure this horrid ſtate; I am never alone

alone with that worthy man, but I am ready to fall on my knees before him, to confeſs my fault, and to expire at his feet with grief and ſhame

Nevertheleſs, the reaſons which at firſt reſtrained me, acquire freſh ſtrength every day, and every motive which might induce me to make the declaration, conſpires to enjoin me ſilence When I conſider the peaceable and tranquil ſtate of our family, I cannot reflect without horror, when an irreparable diſturbance might be occaſioned by a ſingle word. After ſix years paſſed in perfect union, ſhall I venture to diſturb the peace of ſo good and diſcreet a huſband, who has no other will than that of his happy wife, no other pleaſure than to ſee order and tranquillity throughout his family? Shall I afflict with domeſtic broils, an aged father, who appears to be ſo contented, and ſo delighted with the happineſs of his daughter and his friend? Shall I expoſe my dear children, thoſe lovely and promiſing infants, to have their education neglected and ſhamefully ſlighted, to become the melancholy victims of family-diſcord, between a father inflamed with juſt indignation, tortured with jealouſy, and an unfortunate and guilty mother, always bathed in tears? I know what Mr Wolmar is, now he eſteems his wife, but how do I know what he will be when he no longer regards her? Perhaps he ſeems calm and moderate, becauſe his predominant paſſion has had no room to diſplay itſelf. Perhaps he would be as violent in the impetuoſity of his anger, as he is gentle and compoſed now he has no ſubject of provocation.

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If I owe ſuch regard to every one about me, is not ſomething likewiſe due to myſelf? Does not a virtuous and regular courſe of life for ſix years, obliterate, in ſome meaſure, the errors of youth, and am I ſtill obliged to undergo the puniſhment of a failing which I have ſo long lamented? I own to you, my dear couſin, that I look backwards with reluctance the reflection humbles me to that degree, that it diſpirits me, and I am too ſuſceptible of ſhame, to endure the idea, without falling into a kind of deſpair. I muſt reflect on the time which has paſſed ſince my marriage, in order to recover myſelf. My preſent ſituation inſpires me with a confidence of which thoſe diſagreeable reflections would deprive me. I love to nouriſh in my breaſt theſe returning ſentiments of honour. The rank of a wife and mother exalts my ſoul, and ſupports me againſt the remorſe of my former condition When I view my children and their father about me, I fancy that every thing breathes an air of virtue, and they baniſh from my mind the irkſome remembrance of my former frailties Their innocence is the ſecurity of mine, they become dearer to me, by being the inſtruments of my reformation; and I think on the violation of honour with ſuch horror, that I can ſcarce believe myſelf the ſame perſon who formerly was capable of forgetting its precepts I perceive myſelf ſo different from what I was, ſo confirmed in my preſent ſtate, that I am almoſt induced to conſider what I have to declare, as a confeſſion which does not concern me, and which I am not obliged to make

Such is the ſtate of anxiety and uncertainty in which

which I am continually fluctuating in your abſence Do you know what may be the conſequence of this one day or other? My father is ſoon to ſet out for Berne, and is determined not to return till he has put an end to a tedious lawſuit, not being willing to leave us the trouble of concluding it, and perhaps doubting our zeal in the proſecution of it. In the mean time, between his departure and his return, I ſhall be alone with my huſband, and I perceive that it will then be impoſſible for me to keep the fatal ſecret any longer. When we have company, you know Mr Wolmar often chuſes to retire and take a ſolitary walk, he chats with the peaſants, he inquires into their ſituation, he examines the condition of their grounds, and aſſiſts them, if they require it, both with his purſe and his advice But when we are alone, he never walks without me, he ſeldom leaves his wife and children, but enters into their little amuſements with ſuch an amiable ſimplicity, that on theſe occaſions I always feel a more than common tenderneſs for him In theſe tender moments, my reſerve is in ſo much more danger, as he himſelf frequently gives me opportunities of throwing it off, and has a hundred times held converſation with me which ſeemed to excite me to confidence I perceive, that ſooner or later, I muſt diſcloſe my mind to him; but ſince you would have the confeſſion concerted between us, and made with all the precaution which diſcretion requires, return to me immediately, or I can anſwer for nothing

My dear friend, I muſt conclude, and yet what I had to add is of ſuch importance, that

you

you muſt allow me a few words more. You are not only of ſervice to me when I am with my children and my huſband, but above all when I am alone with your poor Julia ſolitude is more dangerous, becauſe it grows agreeable to me, and I court it without intending it It is not, as you are ſenſible, that my heart ſtill ſmarts with the pain of its former wounds, no, they are cured, I perceive that they are, I am very certain, I dare believe myſelf virtuous I am under no apprehenſions about the preſent, it is the time paſt which torments me. There are ſome reflections as dreadful as the original ſenſation, the recollection moves us, we are aſhamed to find that we ſhed tears, and we do but weep the more They are tears of compaſſion, of regret, and of repentance, love has no ſhare in them, I no longer harbour the leaſt ſpark of love, but I lament the miſchiefs it has occaſioned, I bewail the fate of a worthy man, who has been bereft of peace, and perhaps of life, by gratifying an indiſcreet paſſion. Alas! he has undoubtedly periſhed in this long and dangerous voyage which he undertook at the inſtigation of deſpair If he was living, he would ſend us tidings from the furtheſt part of the world; near four years have elapſed ſince his departure. They ſay the ſquadron on which he is aboard, has ſuffered a thouſand diſaſters, that it hath loſt three fourths of its crews, that ſeveral ſhips have gone to the bottom, and that no one can tell what is become of the reſt He is no more, he is no more! A ſecret foreboding tells me ſo The unfortunate wretch has not been ſpared, any more than ſo many others

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The diſtreſſes of his voyage, and melancholy, ſtill more fatal than all, have ſhortened his days Thus vaniſhes every thing which glitters for a while on earth. The reproach of having occaſioned the death of a worthy man, was all that was wanting to complete the torments of my conſcience. Ah! my Clara, with what a ſoul was he endued! how ſuſceptible of the tendereſt love! He deſerved to live.

In vain I try to diſſipate theſe melancholy ideas; they return every minute in ſpite of me Your friend requires your aſſiſtance, to enable her to baniſh, or to moderate them; and ſince I cannot forget this unfortunate man, I had rather talk of him with you, than think of him by myſelf.

You ſee how many reaſons concur to make your company continually neceſſary to me. If you, who have been more diſcreet and fortunate, are not moved by the ſame reaſons, yet does not your inclination perſuade you of the ſame neceſſity? If it is true that you will never marry again, having ſo little ſatisfaction in your family, what houſe can be more convenient for you than mine? For my part, I am in pain, as I know what you endure in your own; for notwithſtanding your diſſimulation, I am no ſtranger to your manner of living, and I am not to be duped by thoſe gay airs which you affected to diſplay at Clarens You have often reproached me with my failings, and I have a very great one to reproach you with in your turn, which is, that your grief is too ſolitary and confined You get into a corner to indulge your affliction, as if you were aſhamed to weep before your

friend

friend. Clara, I do not like this I am not ungenerous like you; I do not condemn your tears, I would not have you ceaſe at the end of two or ten years, or while you live, to honour the memory of ſo tender a huſband; but I blame you, that after having paſſed the beſt of your days in weeping with your Julia, you rob her of the pleaſure of weeping in her turn with you, and of waſhing away, by more honourable tears, the ſcandal of thoſe which ſhe ſhed in your boſom. If you are aſhamed of your grief, you are a ſtranger to real affliction! If you find a kind of pleaſure in it, why will you not let me partake of it? Are you ignorant that a participation of affections communicates a ſoft and affecting quality to melancholy, which content never feels? And was not friendſhip particularly deſigned to alleviate the evils of the wretched, and leſſen their pains?

Such, my dear, are the reflections you ought to indulge, to which I muſt add, that when I propoſe your coming to live with me, I make the propoſal no leſs in my huſband's name than my own. He has often expreſſed his ſurprize, and even been offended, that two ſuch intimates as we ſhould live aſunder he aſſures me that he has told you ſo, and he is not a man who talks inadvertently. I do not know what reſolution you will take with reſpect to theſe propoſals, I have reaſon to hope, that it will be ſuch as I could wiſh. However it be, mine is fixed and unalterable. I have not forgotten the time when you would have followed me to England. My incomparable friend! it is now my turn. You know my diſlike of the town, my taſte for

the country, for rural occupations, and how ſtrongly a reſidence of three years has attached me to my houſe at Clarens You are no ſtranger likewiſe to the trouble of removing a whole family, and you are ſenſible that it would be abuſing my father's good nature to oblige him to move ſo often. Therefore if you will not leave your family and come to govern mine, I am determined to take a houſe at Lauſanne, where we will all live with you. Prepare yourſelf therefore, every thing requires it, my inclination, my duty, my happineſs. The ſecurity of my honour, the recovery of my reaſon, my condition, my huſband, my children, myſelf, I owe all to you, I am indebted to you for all the bleſſings I enjoy, I ſee nothing but what reminds me of your goodneſs, and without you I am nothing. Come then, my much loved friend, my guardian angel, come and enjoy the work of your own hands, come and gather the fruits of your benevolence Let us have but one family, as we have but one ſoul to cheriſh it; you ſhall ſuperintend the education of my ſons, and I will take care of your daughter, we will ſhare the maternal duties between us, and make our pleaſure double. We will raiſe our minds together to the contemplation of that Being, who purified mine by means of your endeavours, and having nothing more to hope for in this life, we will quietly wait for the next, in the boſom of innocence and friendſhip.

LET-

LETTER CXXI.

ANSWER.

GOOD heaven! my dear couſin, how I am delighted with your letter! Thou lovely preacher! .. Lovely indeed but in the preaching ſtrain nevertheleſs. What a charming peroration! A perfect model of ancient oratory The Athenian architect! .. That ſtoic ſpeaker! You remember him .. In your old Plutarch ... Pompous deſcriptions, ſuperb temple! When he had finiſhed his harangue, comes another, a plain man, with a grave, ſober, and unaffected air .. who anſwered, as your couſin Clara might do . with a low, hollow, and deep tone *All that he has ſaid, I will do* Here he ended, and the aſſembly rang with applauſe! Peace to the man of words. My dear, we may be conſidered in the light of theſe two architects, and the temple in queſtion, is that of friendſhip.

But let us recapitulate all the fine things you have ſaid to me Firſt, that we loved each other, ſecondly, that my company was neceſſary to you, thirdly, that yours was neceſſary to me likewiſe, and laſtly, that as it was in our power to live together the reſt of our days, we ought to do it And you have really diſcovered all this without a guide! In truth, thou art a woman of vaſt eloquence! Well, but let me tell you how I was employed on my part, while you was compoſing this ſublime epiſtle After that, I will leave you to judge, whether what

you ſay, or what I do, is moſt to the purpoſe.

I had no ſooner loſt my huſband, than you ſupplied the vacancy he had left in my heart While he was living, he ſhared my affections with you, when he was gone, I was yours entirely, and, as you obſerve, with reſpect to the conformity of friendſhip and maternal affection, my daughter was an additional tie to unite us. I not only determined, from that time, to paſs my days with you, but I formed a more enlarged plan The more effectually to blend our two families into one, I propoſed, on a ſuppoſition that all circumſtances prove agreeable, to marry my daughter ſome day or other to your eldeſt ſon, and the name of huſband aſſumed in jeſt, ſeemed to be a luckly omen of his taking it one day in earneſt.

With this view, I endeavoured immediately to put an end to the trouble of a conteſted inheritance, and finding that my circumſtances enabled me to ſacrifice ſome part of my claim in order to ſettle the reſt, I thought of nothing but placing my daughter's fortune in ſome ſure hands, where it might be ſecure from any apprehenſions of a law-ſuit. You know that I am whimſical in moſt things, my whim in this was to ſurpriſe you I intended to come into your room one morning early, with my child in one hand, and the parchment in the other, and to have preſented them both to you, with a fine compliment on committing to your care the mother, the daughter, and their effects, that is to ſay, my child's fortune. Govern her, I propoſed to have ſaid, as beſt ſuits the intereſt of your ſon, for from henceforwards it is your concern

and

and his, for my own part, I ſhall trouble myſelf about her no longer.

Full of this pleaſing idea, it was neceſſary for me to open my mind to ſomebody who might aſſiſt me to execute my project. Gueſs now whom I choſe for a confident? One Mr Wolmar Should you not know him? "My huſband, couſin?" Yes, your huſband, couſin The very man from whom you make ſuch a difficulty of concealing a ſecret, which it is of conſequence to him never to know, is he who has kept a ſecret from you, the diſcovery of which would have given you ſo much pleaſure This was the true ſubject of all that myſterious converſation between us, about which you uſed to banter us with ſo much humour. You ſee what hypocrites theſe huſbands are Is it not very droll in them to accuſe us of diſſimulation? But I required much more of your huſband. I perceived that you had the ſame plan which I had in view, but you kept it more to yourſelf, as one who did not care to communicate her thoughts, till ſhe was led to the diſcovery With an intent therefore to make your ſurpriſe more agreeable, I would have had him, when you propoſed our living together, to have ſeemed as if he diſapproved of your eagerneſs, and to have given his conſent with reluctance To this he made me an anſwer, which I will remember, and which you ought never to forget, for ſince the firſt exiſtence of huſbands, I doubt whether any one of them ever made ſuch an anſwer before. It was as follows "My dear little couſin, I know Julia "I know her well better than ſhe imagines, perhaps her generoſity of heart is

" ſo great, that what ſhe deſires ought not to be
" refuſed, and her ſenſibility is too ſtrong to
" bear a denial, without being afflicted. Du-
" ring theſe five years that we have been mar-
" ried, I do not know that I have given her the
" leaſt uneaſineſs, and I hope to die without
" ever being the cauſe of her feeling a mo-
" ment's inquietude." Couſin, reflect on this
This is the huſband whoſe peace of mind you are inceſſantly meditating to diſturb.

For my part, I had leſs delicacy, or more confidence in your gentleneſs of diſpoſition, and I ſo naturally diverted the converſation to which your affection ſo frequently led you, that as you could not tax me with coldneſs or indifference towards you, you took it into your head that I had a ſecond marriage in view, and that I loved you better than any thing, except a huſband. You ſee, my dear child, your moſt inmoſt thoughts do not eſcape me I gueſs your meaning, I penetrate your deſigns, I enter into the bottom of your ſoul, and for that reaſon I have always adored you This ſuſpicion, which ſo opportunely led you into a miſtake, appeared to me well worth encouraging. I took upon me to play the part of the coquetiſh widow, which I acted ſo well as to deceive even you. It is a part for which I have more talents than inclination I ſkilfully employed that piquant air which I know how to put on, and with which I have entertained myſelf in making a jeſt of more than one young coxcomb. You have been abſolutely the dupe of my affectation; and you thought me in haſte to ſupply that place of a man, to whom of all others it would be moſt diffi-

difficult to find a ſucceſſor But I am too ingenuous to play the counterfeit long, and your apprehenſions were ſoon removed But to confirm you the more, I will explain to you my real ſentiments on that point

I have told you an hundred times when I was a maid, that I was never deſigned for a wife. If my determination had depended on myſelf alone, I ſhould never have married. But our ſex cannot purchaſe liberty but by ſlavery, and before we can become our own miſtreſſes, we muſt begin by being ſervants. Though my father did not confine me, I was not without uneaſineſs in my family. To free myſelf from that vexation, therefore, I married Mr Orbe. He was ſo worthy a man, and loved me with ſuch tenderneſs, that I moſt ſincerely loved him in my turn Experience gave me a more advantageous opinion of marriage than I had conceived of it, and effaced thoſe ill impreſſions I had received from Chaillot. Mr Orbe made me happy, and did not repent his endeavours I ſhould have diſcharged my duty with any other, but I ſhould alſo have vexed him, and I am ſenſible that nothing but ſo good a huſband could have made me a tolerable wife. Would you think that even this afforded me matter of complaint? My dear, we loved each other too affectionately, we were never gay. A ſlighter friendſhip would have been more ſprightly; I ſhould even have preferred it; and I think I ſhould have choſen to have lived with leſs content, if I could have laughed oftener.

Add to this, that the particular circumſtances of your ſituation gave me uneaſineſs. I need

not

not remind you of the dangers to which an unruly paſſion expoſed you. I reflect on them with horror. If you had only hazarded your life, perhaps I might have retained ſome remains of gaiety but terror and grief pierced my ſoul, and till I ſaw you married, I did not enjoy one moment of real pleaſure You knew my affliction, you felt it It had great influence over your good diſpoſition, and I ſhall always bleſs thoſe fortunate tears which were probably the occaſion of your return to virtue

In this manner I paſſed all the time that I lived with my huſband Since it has pleaſed the Almighty to take him from me, judge whether I can hope to find another ſo much to my mind, and whether I have any temptation to make the experiment? No, couſin, matrimony is too ſerious a ſtate for me, its gravity does not ſuit with my humour, it makes me dull, and ſits awkwardly upon me, not to mention that all conſtraint whatever is intolerable to me Conſider, you who know me, what charms can an attachment have in my eyes, during which, for ſeven years together, I have not laughed ſeven times heartily! I do not propoſe, like you, to turn matron at eight-and-twenty. I find myſelf a ſmart little widow, likely to get a huſband ſtill, and I think that if I were a man, I ſhould have no objection to ſuch a one as myſelf But to marry again, couſin! hear me; I ſincerely lament my poor huſband, I would have given up one half of my days, to have paſſed the other half with him, and nevertheleſs, could he return to life, I ſhould take him again for no other reaſon than becauſe I had taken him before.

I have

I have declared to you my real intentions If I have not been able to put them in execution, notwithſtanding Mr Wolmar's kind endeavours, it is becauſe difficulties ſeem to increaſe, as my zeal to ſurmount them ſtrengthens But my zeal will always gain the aſcendency, and before the ſummer is over, I hope to return to you for the remainder of my days

It remains now that I vindicate myſelf from the reproach of concealing my uneaſineſs, and chuſing to weep alone, I do not deny it, and this is the way I ſpend the moſt agreeable time I paſs here. I never enter my houſe, but I perceive ſome traces which remind me of him who made it agreeable to me I cannot take a ſtep, I cannot view a ſingle object, without perceiving ſome ſigns of his tenderneſs and goodneſs of heart, and would you have my mind to be unaffected? When I am here, I am ſenſible of nothing but the loſs I have ſuſtained When I am near you, I view all the comfort I have left Can you make your influence over my diſpoſition, a crime in me? If I weep in your abſence, and laugh in your company, whence proceeds the difference? Ungrateful woman! it is becauſe you alleviate all my afflictions, and I cannot grieve while I enjoy your ſociety

You have ſaid a great deal in favour of our long friendſhip but I cannot pardon you for omitting a circumſtance that does me moſt honour, which is, that I love you, though you eclipſe me! Julia, you were born to rule. Your empire is more deſpotic than any in the world It extends even over the will, and I experience it more than any one How happens it, my

dear

dear couſin? We are both in love with virtue, honour is equally dear to us, our talents are the ſame, I have very near as much ſpirit as you, and am not leſs handſome I am ſenſible of all this, and yet notwithſtanding all, you preſcribe to me, you overcome me, you caſt me down, your genius cruſhes mine, and I am nothing before you Even while you were engaged in an attachment with which you reproached yourſelf, and that I, who had not copied your failing, might have taken the lead in my turn, yet the aſcendency ſtill remained in you The frailty I condemned in you, appeared to me almoſt in the light of a virtue I could ſcarce forbear admiring in you, what I ſhould have cenſured in another In ſhort, even at that time, I never accoſted you without a ſenſible emotion of involuntary reſpect, and it is certain that nothing but your gentleneſs and affability of manners could intitle me to the rank of your friend by nature, I ought to be your ſervant Explain this myſtery if you can, for my part, I am at a loſs how to ſolve it

But after all, I do in ſome meaſure conceive the reaſon, and I believe that I have explained it before now It is, that your diſpoſition enlivens every one round you, and gives them a kind of new exiſtence, for which they are bound to adore you, ſince they derive it entirely from you It is true, I have done you ſervices of ſome importance, you have ſo often acknowledged them, that it is impoſſible for me to forget them I cannot deny but that, without my aſſiſtance, you had been utterly undone But what could I do, more than return the obligation

I owed

I owed you? Is it poſſible to have a long acquaintance with you, without finding one's mind impreſſed with the charms of virtue, and the delights of friendſhip? Know you not that you have power to arm in your defence every one who approaches you, and that I have no advantage whatever over others, but that of being, like the guards of Seſoſtris, of the ſame age and ſex, and of having been brought up with you However it be, it is ſome comfort to Clara, that, though ſhe is of leſs eſtimation than Julia, yet without Julia ſhe would be of leſs eſtimation ſtill, and in ſhort, to tell you the truth, I think that we ſtood in great need of each other, and that we ſhould both have been loſers if fate had parted us

My chief anxiety at preſent is, leſt while my affairs detain me here, you ſhould diſcover your ſecret, which you are every minute ready to diſcloſe Conſider, I intreat you, that there are ſolid and powerful reaſons for concealing it, and that nothing but a miſtaken principle can tempt you to reveal it Beſides, our ſuſpicion that it is no longer a ſecret to him who is moſt intereſted in the diſcovery, is an additional argument againſt making any declaration without the greateſt circumſpection Perhaps the reſerve of your huſband may ſerve as an example and a leſſon to us for in ſuch caſes there is very often a great difference between pretending to be ignorant of a thing, and being obliged to know it. Stay therefore, I beſeech you, till we conſult once more on this affair. If your apprehenſions were well grounded, and your lamented friend was no more, the beſt reſolu-

tion

tion you could take, would be to let your history and his misfortunes be buried together If he is alive, as I hope he is, the case may be different; but let us wait till we are sure of the event. In every state of the case, do not you think that you ought to pay some regard to the last advice of an unfortunate wretch, whose evils all spring from you?

With regard to the danger of solitude, I conceive and cannot condemn your fears, though I am persuaded that they are ill-founded Your past errors have made you fearful, but I presage better of the time present, and you would be less apprehensive, if you had more reason to be so But I cannot approve of your anxiety with regard to the fate of our poor friend Now your affections have taken a different turn, believe me, he is as dear to me as to yourself. Nevertheless, I have forebodings quite contrary to yours, and more agreeable to reason Lord B—— has heard from him twice, and wrote to me, on the receipt of the last letter, to acquaint me that he was in the South seas, and had already escaped all the dangers you apprehend You know all this as well as I, and yet you are as uneasy as if you knew it not. But there is a circumstance you are ignorant of, and of which I must inform you; it is, that the ship which he is on board of, was seen two months ago off the Canaries, making sail for Europe This is the account my father received from Holland, which he did not fail to transmit to me, for it is his custom to be more punctual in informing me concerning public affairs, than in acquainting me with his own private concerns My heart

tells

tells me that it will not be long before we hear news of our philoſophers; and that your tears will be dried up, unleſs, after having lamented him as dead, you ſhould weep to find him alive But, thank God, you are no longer in danger from your former weakneſs.

Deh! foſſe or qui quel miſer pur un poco,
Ch' è gia di piangere e di viver laſſo!

Alas! what fears ſhould heighten your concern,
So us'd in liſtleſs ſolitude to mourn!

This is the ſum of my anſwer She who loves you propoſes and ſhares with you the agreeable expectation of a laſting re-union. You find that you are neither the firſt, nor the only author of this project and that the execution of it is more forward than you imagined Have patience therefore, my dear friend, for this ſummer. It is better to delay our meeting for ſome time, than to be again obliged to ſeparate

Well, good Madam, have not I been as good as my word, and is not my triumph complete? Come, fall on your knees, kiſs this letter with reſpect, and humbly acknowledge, that, once in her life at leaſt, Julia Wolmar has been outdone in friendſhip

LETTER CXXII.

To Mrs ORBE.

MY dear couſin, my benefactreſs, my friend! I come from the extremities of the earth,

and bring a heart ſtill full of affection for you. I have croſſed the line four times; have traverſed the two hemiſpheres, have ſeen the four quarters of the globe, its diameter has been between us I have been quite round it, and yet could not eſcape from you one moment. It is in vain to fly from the object of our adoration its image, more fleet than the winds, purſues us from the end of the world, and wherever we tranſport ourſelves, we bear with us the idea by which we are animated I have endured a great deal, I have ſeen others ſuffer more How many unhappy wretches have I ſeen periſh! Alas! they rated life at a high price! and yet I ſurvived them . Perhaps my condition was leſs to be pitied, the miſeries of my companions affected me more than my own. I am wretched here, ſaid I to myſelf, but there is a corner of the earth where I am happy and tranquil; and the proſpect of felicity beſide the lake of Geneva, made me amends for what I ſuffered on the ocean. I have the pleaſure on my return to find my hopes confirmed Lord B—— informs me that you both enjoy health and peace; and that, if you, in particular, have loſt the agreeable diſtinction of a wife, you nevertheleſs retain the title of a friend and mother, which may contribute to your happineſs.

I am at preſent too much in haſte to ſend you a detail of my voyage in this letter I dare hope that I ſhall ſoon have a more convenient opportunity, mean time I muſt be content to give you a ſlight ſketch, rather to excite than gratify your curioſity. I have been near four

years

years in making this immenſe tour, and have returned in the ſame ſhip in which I ſet ſail, the only one of the whole ſquadron which we have brought back to England.

I have ſeen South-America, that vaſt continent, which, for want of arms, has been obliged to ſubmit to the Europeans, who have made it a deſart, in order to ſecure their dominion. I have ſeen the coaſts of Brahil, from whence Liſbon and London draw their treaſures, and where the miſerable natives tread upon gold and diamonds, without daring to lay hands on them for their own uſe. I croſſed, in mild weather, thoſe ſtormy ſeas under the antarctic circle, and met with the moſt horrible tempeſts in the Pacific ocean.

E in mar dubbioſo ſotto ignoto polo
Provai l'onde fallaci, e l'vento infido.

Have brav'd the unknown ſeas, where near the pole,
Blow faithleſs winds, and waves deceitful roll

I have ſeen, at a diſtance, the abode of thoſe ſuppoſed giants, who are no otherwiſe greater than the reſt of their ſpecies, than as they are more couragious, and who maintain their independance more by a life of ſimplicity and frugality, than by an extraordinary ſtature. I reſided three months in a deſart and delightful iſland, which afforded an agreeable and lively repreſentation of the primitive beauty of nature, and which ſeems to be fixed at the extremity of the world, to ſerve as an aſylum to innocence and perſecuted love, but the greedy Eu-

ropean indulges his brutal diſpoſition in preventing the peaceful Indian from reſiding there, and does juſtice on himſelf by not making it his own abode

I have ſeen in the rivers of Mexico and Peru, the ſame ſcenes as at Braſil, I have ſeen the few wretched inhabitants, the ſad remains of two powerful nations, loaded with irons, ignominy, and miſery, weeping in the midſt of their precious metals, and reproaching heaven for having laviſhed ſuch treaſures upon them I have ſeen the dreadful conflagration of a whole city, which periſhed in the flames without having made any reſiſtance or defence. Such is the right of war among the intelligent, humane, and refined Europeans! They are not ſatisfied with doing the enemy all the miſchief from whence they can reap any advantage, but they reckon as clear gain all the deſtruction they can make among his poſſeſſions I have coaſted along almoſt the whole weſtern part of America, not without being ſtruck with admiration, on beholding fifteen hundred leagues of coaſt, and the greateſt ſea in the world, under the dominion of a ſingle potentate, who may be ſaid to keep the keys of one hemiſphere of the globe.

After having croſſed this vaſt ſea, I beheld a new ſcene on the other continent. I have ſeen the moſt numerous and moſt illuſtrious nation in the world, in ſubjection to a handful of banditti, I have had near intercourſe with this famous people, and am not at all ſurpriſed that they are ſlaves As often conquered as attacked, they have always been a prey to the firſt in-

vader,

vader, and poſſibly will be ſo to the end of the world. I think them well ſuited to their ſervile ſtate, ſince they have not the courage even to complain They are learned, lazy, hypocritical, and deceitful they talk a great deal without ſaying any thing to the purpoſe; they are full of ſpirit without any genius, they abound in ſigns, but are barren in ideas, they are polite, full of compliments, dextrous, crafty, and knaviſh, they compriſe all the duties of life in trifles, all morality in grimace, and have no other idea of humanity than what conſiſts in bows and ſalutations

I landed upon a ſecond deſart iſland, more unknown, more delightful ſtill than the firſt, and where the moſt cruel accident had like to have confined us for ever. I was the only one, perhaps, whom ſo agreeable an exile did not terrify, am I not doomed to be an exile everywhere? In this place of terror and delight I ſaw the attempts of human induſtry to diſengage a civiliſed being from a ſolitude where he wants nothing, and plunge him into an abyſs of new neceſſities.

On the vaſt ocean, where one would imagine men would be glad to meet with their own ſpecies, I have ſeen two great ſhips ſail up to each other, join, attack, and fight together with fury, as if that immenſe ſpace was too little for either of them. I have ſeen them diſcharge flames and bullets againſt each other In a fight which was not of long duration, I have ſeen the picture of hell. I have heard the triumphant ſhouts of the victors drown the cries of the wounded and the groans of the dying I bluſhed to

receive my ſhare of an immenſe plunder; but received it in the nature of a truſt, and as it was taken from the wretched, to the wretched it ſhall be reſtored.

I have ſeen Europe tranſported to the extremities of Africa, by the labours of that avaritious, patient, and induſtrious people, who by time and perſeverance have ſurmounted difficulties which all the heroiſm of other nations could never overcome. I have ſeen thoſe immenſe and miſerable countries, which ſeemed deſtined to no other purpoſe than to cover the earth with herds of ſlaves. At their vile appearance, I turned away my eyes out of diſdain, horror and pity, and on beholding one fourth part of my fellow-creatures transformed into beaſts for the ſervice of the reſt, I could not forbear lamenting that I was a man.

Laſtly, I beheld, in my fellow-travellers, a bold and intrepid people, whoſe freedom and example retrieved, in my opinion, the honour of the ſpecies, a people who deſpiſe pain and death, and who dread nothing but hunger and diſquiet. In their commander, I beheld a captain, a ſoldier, a pilot, a prudent and great man, and, to ſay ſtill more perhaps, a friend worthy of Lord B——. But throughout the whole world, I have never beheld any reſemblance of Clara Orbe, or Julia Etange, or found one who could recompenſe a heart truly ſenſible of their worth, for the loſs of their ſociety

How ſhall I ſpeak of my cure? It is from you that I muſt learn how far it is perfect. Do I return more free, and more diſcreet than I departed?

parted? I dare believe that I do, and yet I cannot affirm it, the ſame image reigns conſtantly in my heart; you know how impoſſible it is for me ever to diſpoſſeſs it but her dominion there is now more worthy of her, and if I do not deceive myſelf, the empire ſhe holds in my heart, is the ſame ſhe holds in yours. Yes, my dear couſin, her virtue has ſubdued me, I am now, with regard to her, nothing more than a moſt ſincere and tender friend, my adoration of her is of the ſame nature with yours, or rather, my affections do not ſeem to be weakened, but rectified, and however nicely I examine, I find them to be as pure as the object which inſpires them What can I ſay more, till I am put to the proof, by which I may be able to form a right judgment of myſelf? I am ſincere and honeſt, I will be what I ought to be, but how ſhall I anſwer for my affections, when I have ſo much reaſon to miſtruſt them? Have I power over the paſt? How can I avoid recollecting a thouſand paſſions which have formerly diſtracted me? How ſhall my imagination diſtinguiſh what is, from what has been? And how ſhall I conſider her as a friend, whom I never yet ſaw but as a miſtreſs? Whatever you may think of the ſecret motive of my eagerneſs, it is honeſt and rational, and merits your approbation. I will anſwer beforehand, at leaſt for my intentions. Permit me to ſee you, and examine me yourſelf; or allow me to ſee Julia, and I ſhall then know the condition of my heart.

I am to attend Lord B—— into Italy Shall I paſs cloſe by your houſe, and not ſee you? Do you think this poſſible? Alas! if you are ſo cruel

to

to require it, you ought not to be obeyed! But why ſhould you deſire it? Are you not the ſame Clara, as kind and compaſſionate as you are virtuous and diſcreet, who condeſcended from her infancy to love me, and who ought to love me ſtill more, now that I am indebted to her for every thing. No, my dear and lovely friend, ſuch a cruel denial will neither become you, nor be juſt to me; it ſhall not put the finiſhing ſtroke to my miſery. Once more, once more in my life, I will lay my heart at your feet I will ſee you, you ſhall conſent to an interview I will ſee Julia likewiſe, and ſhe too ſhall give her conſent. You are both of you too ſenſible of my regard for her. Can you believe me capable of making this requeſt, if I found myſelf unworthy to appear before her? She has long ſince bewailed the effects of her charms, ah! let her for once behold the fruits of her virtue!

P S. Lord B——'s affairs detain him here for ſome time; if I may be allowed to ſee you, why ſhould I not get the ſtart of him, to be with you the ſooner?

LETTER CXXIII.

From Mr WOLMAR.

ALTHOUGH we are yet unacquainted, I am commanded to write to you. The moſt diſcreet and moſt beloved wife, has lately diſcloſed her heart to her happy huſband He thinks

thinks you worthy to have been beloved by her, and he makes you an offer of his houſe. It is the manſion of peace and innocence; and you will there meet with friendſhip hoſpitality, eſteem, and confidence. Examine your heart, and if you find nothing there to deter you, come without any apprehenſions. You will not depart from him, without leaving behind you at leaſt one friend, by name

WOLMAR.

P. S. Come, my friend, we expect you with eagerneſs. I hope I need not fear a denial.

JULIA.

LETTER CXXIV.

From Mrs ORBE.

In which the preceding letter was incloſed.

WELCOME, welcome, a thouſand times welcome, my dear St Preaux*! for I intend that you ſhall retain that name, at leaſt among us I ſuppoſe it will be ſufficient to tell you, that you will not be excluded, unleſs you mean to exclude yourſelf. When you find, by the incloſed letter, that I have done more than you required of me, you will learn to put more con-

* See letter CVII in the preſent volume

confidence in your friends, and not to reproach them on account of thoſe inquietudes which they participate when they are under the neceſſity of making you uneaſy. Mr Wolmar has a deſire to ſee you; he makes you an offer of his houſe, his friendſhip, and his advice; this is more than requiſite to calm my apprehenſions with regard to your journey, and I ſhould injure myſelf if I miſtruſted you one moment. Mr Wolmar goes farther, he pretends to accompliſh your cure; and ſays, that neither Julia, nor he, nor you, nor I, can be perfectly happy till it is complete. Though I have great confidence in his wiſdom, and more in your virtue, yet I cannot anſwer for the ſucceſs of this undertaking I however know, that, conſidering the diſpoſition of his wife, the pains he propoſes to take is purely out of generoſity to you.

Come then, my worthy friend, in all the ſecurity of an honeſt heart, and ſatisfy the eagerneſs with which we all long to embrace you, and to ſee you eaſy and contented· come to your native land, and in the midſt of your friends reſt yourſelf after all your travels, and forget all the hardſhips you have undergone. The laſt time you ſaw me I was a grave matron, and my friend was on the brink of the grave, but now, as ſhe is well, and I am once more ſingle, you will find me as gay, and almoſt as handſome as ever One thing however is very certain, that I am not altered with reſpect to you, and you may travel many times round the world, and not find one who has ſo ſincere a regard for you as your, *&c.*

LET-

LETTER CXXV.

To Lord B——.

I RISE from bed to write to you, though it is yet the dead of night. I cannot reſt a moment. My heart is ſo tranſported, that I can ſcarce confine it within me You, my Lord, who have reſcued me ſo often from deſpair, ſhall be the worthy confident of the firſt pleaſure I have taſted for this many a year.

I have ſeen her, my Lord! My eyes have beheld her! I have heard her voice. I have preſſed her hand with my lips She recollected me, ſhe received me with joy, ſhe called me her friend, her dear friend; ſhe admitted me into her houſe I am happier than ever I was in my life. I lodge under the ſame roof with her, and while I am writing to you, we are ſcarce thirty paces aſunder.

My ideas are too rapid to be expreſſed; they crowd upon me all at once, and naturally impede each other. I muſt pauſe a while to digeſt my narrative into ſome kind of method

After ſo long an abſence, I had ſcarce given way to the firſt tranſports of my heart, while I embraced you as my friend, my deliverer, and my father, before you thought of taking a journey to Italy. You made me wiſh for it, in hopes of relief from the burden of being uſeleſs to you As you could not immediately diſpatch the affairs which detained you in London, you propoſed my going firſt, that I might have more time to wait for you here I begged leave

to

to come hither; I obtained it, ſet out, and though Julia made the firſt advances towards an interview, yet the pleaſing reflection that I was going to meet her, was checked by the regret of leaving you. My Lord, we are now even, this ſingle ſentiment has cancelled my obligations to you

It is needleſs to tell you that my thoughts were all the way taken up with the object of my journey, but I muſt obſerve one thing, that I began to conſider that ſame object, which had never quitted my imagination, quite in another point of view. Until then, I uſed to recal Julia to my mind, ſparkling, as formerly, with all the charms of youth. I had always beheld her lovely eyes enlivened by that paſſion with which ſhe inſpired me Every feature which I admired, ſeemed in my opinion, to be a ſurety of my happineſs. My affection was ſo interwoven with the idea of her perſon, that I could not ſeparate them. Now I was going to ſee Julia married, Julia a mother, Julia indifferent! I was diſturbed when I reflected how much an interval of eight years might have impaired her beauty She had had the ſmall-pox, ſhe was altered, how great might that alteration be? My imagination obſtinately refuſed to allow any blemiſh in that lovely face. I reflected likewiſe on the expected interview between us, and what kind of reception I might expect. This firſt meeting preſented itſelf to my mind under a thouſand different appearances, and this momentary idea croſſed my imagination a thouſand times a-day.

When I perceived the top of the hills, my heart

heart beat violently, and told me, There ſhe is! I was affected in the ſame manner at ſea, on viewing the coaſt of Europe I felt the ſame emotions at Meillerie, when I diſcovered the houſe of the Baron d'Etange. The world, in my imagination, is divided only into two regions, *that* where ſhe is, and *that* where ſhe is not. The former dilates as I remove from her, and contracts when I approach her, as a ſpot where I am deſtined never to arrive It is at preſent confined to the walls of her chamber. Alas! that place alone is inhabited, all the reſt of the univerſe is an empty ſpace

The nearer I drew to Switzerland, the greater were my emotions. That inſtant in which I diſcovered the lake of Geneva from the heights of Jura, was a moment of ecſtaſy and rapture The ſight of my country, that beloved country, where a deluge of pleaſure had overflowed my heart, the pure and wholeſome air of the Alps; the gentle breeze of the country, more ſweet than the perfumes of the Eaſt; that rich and fertile ſpot, that unrivalled landſcape, the moſt beautiful that ever ſtruck the eye of man, that delightful abode, to which I found nothing comparable in the vaſt tour of the globe, the aſpect of a free and happy people, the mildneſs of the ſeaſon, the ſerenity of the climate, a thouſand pleaſing recollections, which recalled to my mind the pleaſures I had enjoyed · all theſe circumſtances together threw me into a kind of tranſport which I cannot deſcribe, and ſeemed to collect the enjoyment of my whole life into one happy moment

Having croſſed the lake, I felt a new impreſ-

ſion, of which I had no idea It was a certain emotion of fear, which checked my heart, and diſturbed me in ſpite of all my endeavours This dread, of which I could not diſcover the cauſe, increaſed as I drew nearer to the town; it abated my eagerneſs to get thither, and roſe to ſuch a height, that my expedition gave me as much uneaſineſs as my delay had occaſioned me before When I came to Vevai, I felt a ſenſation which was very far from being agreeable. I was ſeized with a violent palpitation, which ſtopped my breath, ſo that I ſpoke with a trembling and broken accent. I could ſcarce make myſelf underſtood when I inquired for Mr Wolmar, for I durſt not mention his wife. They told me he lived at Clarens. This information eaſed my breaſt from a preſſure equal to five hundred weight, and conſidering the two leagues I had to travel farther as a kind of reſpite, I was rejoiced at a circumſtance which at any other time would have made me uneaſy; but I learnt with concern that Mrs Orbe was at Lauſanne I went into an inn to recruit my ſtrength, but could not ſwallow a morſel and when I attempted to drink, I was almoſt ſuffocated, and could not empty a glaſs but at ſeveral ſips. When I ſaw the horſes put to, my apprehenſions were doubled. I believe I ſhould have given any thing in the world to have had one of the wheels broken by the way I no longer ſaw Julia, my diſturbed imagination preſented nothing but confuſed objects before me; my ſoul was in a general tumult. I had experienced grief and deſpair, and ſhould have preferred them to that horrible ſtate. In few words, I can aſſure you,

that

that I never in my life underwent ſuch cruel agitation as I ſuffered in this little way, and I am perſuaded that I could not have ſupported it a whole day.

When I arrived, I ordered the chaiſe to ſtop at the gate, and finding that I was not in a condition to walk, I ſent the poſtilion to acquaint Mr Wolmar that a ſtranger wanted to ſpeak with him. He was taking a walk with his wife. They were acquainted with the meſſage, and came round another way, while I kept my eyes fixed on the avenue, and waited in a kind of trance, in expectation of ſeeing ſomebody come from thence.

Julia had no ſooner perceived me than ſhe recollected me. In an inſtant, ſhe ſaw me, ſhe ſhrieked, ſhe ran, ſhe leaped into my arms. At the ſound of her voice I ſtarted, I revived, I ſaw her, I felt her. O my Lord! O my friend! . . I cannot ſpeak . . Her look, her ſhriek, her manner inſpired me with confidence, courage, and ſtrength, in an inſtant. In her arms I felt warmth, and breathed new life. A ſacred tranſport kept us for ſome time cloſely embraced in deep ſilence, and it was not till after we recovered from this agreeable delirium, that our voices broke forth in confuſed murmurs, and our eyes intermingled tears. Mr Wolmar was preſent, I knew he was, I ſaw him: but what was I capable of ſeeing? No, though the whole univerſe had been united againſt me, though a thouſand torments had ſurrounded me, I would not have detached my heart from the leaſt of thoſe careſſes, thoſe tender offerings of a pure and

and ſacred friendſhip, which we will bear with us to heaven

When the violent impetuoſity of our firſt meeting began to abate, Mrs Wolmar took me by the hand, and turning towards her huſband, ſhe ſaid to him, with a certain air of candor and innocence which inſtantly affected me, "Tho' "he is my old acquaintance, I do not preſent him "to you, but I receive him from you, and he "will hereafter enjoy my friendſhip no longer "than he is honoured with yours."—"If new "friends (ſaid Mr Wolmer, embracing me) "expreſs leſs ardor than thoſe of long ſtand-"ing, yet they will grow old in their turn, "and will not yield to any in affection" I received his embraces; but my heart had quite exhauſted itſelf, and I was entirely paſſive

After this ſhort ſcene was over, I obſerved, by a ſide-glance, that they had put up my cloaths, and taken off my trunk. Julia held me by my arm, and I went with them towards the houſe almoſt overwhelmed with pleaſure, to find they were determined I ſhould remain their gueſt

It was then that, upon a more calm contemplation of that lovely face, which I imagined might have grown homely, I ſaw with an agreeable, yet ſad ſurpriſe, that ſhe was really more beautiful and ſparkling than ever. Her charming features are now more regular, ſhe is grown rather fatter, which adds to the reſplendent fairneſs of her complexion. The ſmall-pox has left ſome ſlight marks on her cheeks ſcarce perceptible Inſtead of that mortifying baſhfulneſs which formerly uſed to make her caſt her eyes down-

downwards, you may perceive in her chaſte looks, the ſecurity of virtue allied with gentleneſs and ſenſibility; her countenance, though not leſs modeſt, is leſs timid, an air of greater freedom, and more liberal grace, has ſucceeded that conſtrained carriage which was compounded of tenderneſs and ſhame; and if a ſenſe of her failing rendered her then more bewitching, a conſciouſneſs of her purity now renders her more celeſtial.

We had ſcarce entered the parlour, when ſhe diſappeared, and returned in a minute. She did not come alone. Who do you think ſhe brought with her? Her children! her two lovely little ones, more beauteous than the day, in whoſe infant-faces you might trace all the charms and features of their mother. How was I agitated at this ſight? It is neither to be deſcribed nor conceived. A thouſand different emotions ſeized me at once A thouſand cruel and delightful reflections divided my heart What a lovely ſight! What bitter regrets! I found myſelf diſtracted with grief, and tranſported with joy I ſaw if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the dear object of my affections multiplied before me, Alas! I perceived at the ſame time too convincing a proof that I had no longer my intereſt in her, and my loſſes ſeemed to be multiplied with her increaſe.

She led them towards me. Behold, ſaid ſhe, with an affecting tone that pierced my ſoul, behold the children of your friend they will hereafter be your friends. Henceforward I hope you will be theirs. And immediately the two little creatures ran eagerly to me, took me by the

hand, and ſo overwhelmed me with their innocent careſſes, that every motion of my ſoul centered in tenderneſs. I took them both in my arms, and preſſing them againſt my throbbing breaſt, Dear and lovely little creatures, ſaid I, with a ſigh, you have an arduous taſk to perform. May you reſemble the authors of your being, may you imitate their virtues; and by your own hereafter, adminiſter comfort to their unfortunate friends Mrs Wolmar in rapture threw herſelf round my neck a ſecond time, and ſeemed diſpoſed to repay me, by *her* embraces, thoſe careſſes which *I* had beſtowed on her two ſons. But how different was this from our firſt embrace! I perceived the difference with aſtoniſhment It was the mother of a family whom I now embraced, I ſaw her ſurrounded by her huſband and her children the ſcene ſtruck me with awe. I diſcovered an air of dignity in her countenance, which had not affected me till now. I found myſelf obliged to pay her a new kind of reſpect, her familiarity was almoſt uneaſy to me; lovely as ſhe appeared to me, I could have kiſſed the hem of her garment, with a better grace than I ſaluted her cheek. In a word, from that moment, I perceived that either ſhe or I were no longer the ſame, and I began in earneſt to have a good opinion of myſelf.

Mr Wolmar at length took me by the hand, and conducted me to the apartment which had been prepared for me This, ſaid he, as he entered, is your apartment. it is not deſtined to the uſe of a ſtranger, it ſhall never belong to another, it ſhall hereafter remain empty, if not occupied by you You may judge whether ſuch

a com-

a compliment was not agreeable to me, but as I had not yet deſerved it, I could not hear it without confuſion Mr Wolmar, however, ſaved me the trouble of an anſwer. He invited me to take a turn in the garden. His behaviour there was ſuch as made me leſs reſerved, and aſſuming the air of a man who was well acquainted with my former indiſcretions, but who entirely confided in my integrity, he converſed with me as a father would ſpeak to his child; and by conciliating my eſteem, made it impoſſible for me ever to deceive him No, my Lord, he is not miſtaken in me, I ſhall never forget that it is incumbent on me to juſtify his and your good opinion. But why ſhould my heart reject his favours? Why ſhould the man whom I am bound to love be the huſband of Julia?

That day ſeemed deſtined to put me to every kind of proof which I could poſſibly undergo. After we had joined Mrs Wolmar, her huſband was called away to give ſome neceſſary orders, and I was left alone with her

I then found myſelf involved in freſh perplexity, more painful and more unexpected than any which I had yet experienced. What ſhould I ſay to her? how addreſs her? Should I preſume to remind her of our former connections, and of thoſe times which were ſo recent in my memory? Should I ſuffer her to conclude that I had forgot them, or that I no longer regarded them? Think what a puniſhment it muſt be to treat the object neareſt your heart as a ſtranger! What infamy, on the other hand, to abuſe hoſpitality ſo far as to entertain her with diſcourſe to which ſhe could not now liſten with decency?

Under

Under theſe various perplexities I could not keep my countenance, my colour went and came, I durſt not ſpeak, nor lift up my eyes, nor make the leaſt motion; and I believe that I ſhould have remained in this uneaſy ſituation till her huſband's return, if ſhe had not relieved me For her part, this *tete-a tete* did not ſeem to embarraſs her in the leaſt. She preſerved the ſame manner and deportment as before, and continued to talk to me with the ſame freedom, ſhe only, as I imagined, endeavoured to affect more eaſe and gaiety, tempered with a look, not timid or tender, but ſoft and affectionate, as if ſhe meant to encourage me to recover my ſpirits, and lay aſide a reſerve which ſhe could not but perceive

She talked to me of my long voyages, ſhe inquired into particulars; into thoſe eſpecially which related to the dangers I had eſcaped, and the hardſhips I had endured for ſhe was ſenſible, ſhe ſaid, that ſhe was bound in friendſhip to make me ſome reparation. Ah, Julia, ſaid I, in a plaintive accent, I have enjoyed your company but for a moment; would you ſend me back to the Indies already? No, anſwered ſhe ſmiling, but I would go thither in my turn

I told her that I had given you a detail of my voyage, of which I had brought her a copy She then inquired after you with great eagerneſs I gave her an account of you, which I could not do without recounting the troubles I had undergone, and the uneaſineſs I had occaſioned you She was affected; ſhe began in a more ſerious tone to enter into her own juſtification, and to convince me that it was her duty to act as ſhe had

had done. Mr Wolmar joined us in the middle of her diſcourſe, and what confounded me was, that ſhe proceeded in the ſame manner as if he had not been there. He could not forbear ſmiling, on perceiving my aſtoniſhment. After ſhe concluded, You ſee, ſaid he, an inſtance of the ſincerity which reigns in this houſe. If you mean to be virtuous, learn to copy it it is the only requeſt I have to make, and the only leſſon I would teach you. The firſt ſtep towards vice, is to make a myſtery of actions innocent in themſelves, and whoever is fond of diſguiſe, will ſooner or latter have reaſon to conceal himſelf One moral precept may ſupply the place of all the reſt, which is this. neither to ſay or do any thing, which you would not have all the world ſee and hear. For my part, I have always eſteemed that Roman, above all other men, who wiſhed that his houſe was conſtructed in ſuch manner, that the world might ſee all his tranſactions

I have two propoſals, he continued, to make to you Chuſe freely that which you like beſt, but accept either one or the other. Then taking his wife's hand and mine, and cloſing them together, he ſaid, Our friendſhip commences from this moment, this forms the dear connection, and may it be indiſſoluble. Embrace her as your ſiſter and your friend, treat her as ſuch conſtantly, the more familiar you are with her, the better I ſhall eſteem you but either behave, when alone, as if I was preſent, or in my preſence, as if I was abſent. This is all I deſire. If you prefer the latter, you may chuſe it without any inconvenience, for as I reſerve to myſelf

ſelf the right of intimating to you any thing which diſpleaſes me, ſo long as I am ſilent in that reſpect, you may be certain that I am not offended

I ſhould have been greatly embarraſſed by this diſcourſe two hours before; but Mr Wolmar began to gain ſuch an aſcendancy over me, that his authority already grew ſomewhat familiar to me. We all three entered once more into indifferent converſation, and every time I ſpoke to Julia, I did not fail to addreſs her by the ſtyle of *Madam* Tell me ſincerely, ſaid her huſband at laſt, interrupting me, in your *tete a-tete* party juſt now, did you call her *Madam?* No, anſwered I, ſomewhat diſconcerted, but politeneſs . Such politeneſs, he replied, is nothing but the maſk of vice, where virtue maintains its empire, it is unneceſſary, and I diſcard it Call my wife *Julia* in my preſence, or *Madam* when you are alone, it is indifferent to me. I began to know what kind of man I had to deal with, and I reſolved always to keep my mind in ſuch a ſtate as to bear his examination

My body drooping with fatigue, ſtood in need of refreſhment, and my ſpirits required reſt, I found both one and the other at table. After ſo many years abſence and vexation, after ſuch tedious voyages, I felt to myſelf, in a kind of rapture, I am in company with Julia, I ſee her I talk with her, I ſit at table with her, ſhe views me without inquietude, and entertains me without apprehenſions Nothing interrupts our mutual ſatisfaction Gentle and precious innocence, I never before reliſhed thy charms, and

to-day

to-day, for the firſt time, my exiſtence ceaſes to be painful

At night, when I retired to reſt, I paſſed by their chamber, I ſaw them go in together, I proceeded to my own in a melancholy mood, and this moment was the leaſt agreeable to me of any I that day experienced.

Such, my Lord, were the occurrences of this firſt interview, ſo paſſionately wiſhed for, and ſo dreadfully apprehended I have endeavoured to collect myſelf ſince I have been alone, I have compelled myſelf to ſelf examination, but as I am not yet recovered from the agitation of the preceding day, it is impoſſible for me to judge of the true ſtate of my mind. All that I know for certain, is, that if the nature of my affection for her is not changed, at leaſt the mode of it is altered; for I am always anxious to have a third perſon between us, and I now dread being alone with her, as much as I uſed to long for it formerly

I intended to go to Lauſanne in two or three days; for as yet I have but half ſeen Julia, not having ſeen her couſin, that dear and amiable friend, to whom I am ſo much indebted, and who will always ſhare my friendſhip, my ſervices, my gratitude, and all the affections of my ſoul On my return I will take the firſt opportunity to give you a farther account I have need of your advice, and ſhall keep a ſtrict eye over my conduct I know my duty, and will diſcharge it However agreeable it may be to reſide in this houſe, I am determined, nay I have ſworn, that when I grow too fond of my abode, I will that inſtant leave it.

LET-

LETTER CXXVI.

Mrs WOLMAR *to Mrs* ORBE.

HAD you been ſo obliging as to have complied with our intreaties, and made a longer ſtay with us, you would have had the pleaſure of embracing your friend before your departure. He came hither the day before yeſterday, and wanted to viſit you to-day; but the fatigue of his journey confines him to his room, and this morning he was let blood. Beſides, I was fully determined, in order to puniſh you, not to let him go ſo ſoon; and unleſs you will come hither, I aſſure you that it will be a long time before you ſhall ſee him. You know it would be very improper to let him ſee the *inſeparables* aſunder.

In truth, Clara, I cannot tell what idle apprehenſions bewitched my mind with reſpect to his coming hither, and I am aſhamed to have oppoſed it with ſuch obſtinacy. As much as I dreaded the ſight of him, I ſhould now be ſorry not to have ſeen him, for his preſence has baniſhed thoſe fears which yet diſturbed me, and which, by fixing my attention conſtantly on him, might at length have given me juſt cauſe of uneaſineſs. I am ſo far from being apprehenſive of the affection I feel for him, that I believe I ſhould miſtruſt myſelf more was he leſs dear to me; but I love him as tenderly as ever, though my love is of a different nature. It is from the compariſon of my preſent ſenſations with thoſe which his preſence formerly occaſioned, that I derive

derive my ſecurity, and the difference of ſuch oppoſite ſentiments is perceived in proportion to their vivacity.

With regard to him, though I knew him at the firſt glance, he nevertheleſs appeared to be greatly altered, and what I ſhould formerly have thought impoſſible, he ſeems, in many reſpects, to be changed for the better. On the firſt day, he diſcovered many ſigns of embarraſsment, and it was with great difficulty that I concealed mine from him. But it was not long before he recovered that free deportment and openneſs of manner which becomes his character. I had always ſeen him baſhful and timid, the fear of offending me, and perhaps the ſecret ſhame of acting a part unbecoming a man of honour, gave him a certain air of meanneſs and ſervility before me, which you have more than once very juſtly ridiculed. Inſtead of the ſubmiſſion of a ſlave, at preſent he has the reſpectful behaviour of a friend, who knows how to honour the object of his eſteem. He now communicates his ſentiments with freedom and honeſty, he is not afraid leſt his ſevere maxims of virtue ſhould claſh with his intereſt, he is not apprehenſive of injuring himſelf or affecting me, by praiſing what is commendable in itſelf; and one may perceive, in all he ſays, the confidence of an honeſt man, who can depend upon himſelf, and who derives from his own conſcience that approbation which he formerly ſought for only in my looks. I find alſo that experience has cured him of that dogmatical and peremptory air which men are apt to contract in their cloſets, that he is leſs forward to judge of man-

kind, ſince he has obſerved them more, that he is leſs ready to eſtabliſh general propoſitions, ſince he has ſeen ſo many exceptions; and that, in general, the love of truth has baniſhed the ſpirit of ſyſtem ſo that he is become leſs brilliant, but more rational, and one receives much more information from him, now he does not affect to be ſo knowing.

His figure likewiſe is altered, but nevertheleſs not for the worſe; his countenance is more open, his deportment more ſtately; he has contracted a kind of martial air in his travels, which becomes him the better, as the lively and ſpirited geſture he uſed to expreſs when he was in earneſt is now turned into a more grave and ſober demeanour He is a ſeaman, whoſe appearance is cold and phlegmatic, but whoſe diſcourſe is fiery and impetuous. Though he is turned of thirty, he has the look of a young man, and joins all the ſpirit of youth to the dignity of manhood His complexion is entirely altered, he is almoſt as black as a Negro, and very much marked with the ſmall-pox. My dear, I muſt own the truth, I am uneaſy whenever I view thoſe marks, and I catch myſelf looking at them very often in ſpite of me.

I think I can diſcover, that if I am curious in examining him, he is not leſs attentive in viewing me. After ſo long an abſence, it is natural to contemplate each other with a kind of curioſity, but if this curioſity may be thought to retain any thing of our former eagerneſs, yet what difference is there in the manner as well as the motive of it! If our looks do not meet ſo often, we nevertheleſs view each other with more free-

dom

dom. We ſeem to examine each other alternately by a kind of tacit agreement. Each perceives, as it were, when it is the other's turn, and looks a different way to give the other an opportunity. Though free from the emotions I formerly felt, yet how is it poſſible to behold with indifference one who inſpired the tendereſt paſſion, and who, to this hour, is the object of the pureſt affection? Who knows whether ſelf-love does not endeavour to juſtify paſt errors? Who knows whether, though no longer under the blind influence of paſſion, we do not both flatter ourſelves by ſecretly approving our former choice? Be it as it may, I repeat it without a bluſh, that I feel a moſt tender affection for him, which will endure to the end of my life. I am ſo far from reproaching myſelf for harbouring theſe ſentiments, that I think they deſerve applauſe; I ſhould bluſh not to perceive them, and conſider it as a defect in my character, and the ſymptom of a bad diſpoſition. With reſpect to him, I dare believe, that next to virtue he loves me beyond any thing in the world. I perceive that he thinks himſelf honoured by my eſteem, I in my turn will regard his in the ſame light, and will merit its continuance. Yes! if you ſaw with what tenderneſs he careſſes my children; if you knew what pleaſure he takes in talking of you, you would find, Clara, that I am ſtill dear to him

What increaſes my confidence in the opinion we both entertain of him, is, that Mr Wolmar joins with us, and ſince he has ſeen him, believes, from his own obſervation, all that we have reported to his advantage He has talked

of him much theſe two evenings paſt, congratulating himſelf on account of the meaſures he has taken, and rallying me for my oppoſition. No, ſaid he to me yeſterday, we will not ſuffer ſo worthy a man to miſtruſt himſelf; we will teach him to have more confidence in his own virtue, and perhaps we may one day or other reap the fruits of our preſent endeavours with more advantage than you imagine. For the preſent, I muſt tell you that I am pleaſed with his character, and that I eſteem him particularly for one circumſtance, which he little ſuſpects, namely, the reſerve with which he behaves towards me. The leſs friendſhip he expreſſes for me, the more he makes me his friend; I cannot tell you how much I dreaded leſt he ſhould load me with careſſes. This was the firſt trial I prepared for him; there is yet another by which I intend to prove him; after which, I ſhall ceaſe all farther examination. As to the circumſtance you mentioned, ſaid I, it only proves the frankneſs of his diſpoſition; for he would never reſolve to put on a pliant and ſubmiſſive air before my father, though it was ſo much his intereſt, and I ſo often intreated him to do it. I ſaw with concern that his behaviour deprived him of the only reſource, and yet could not diſlike him for not being able to play the hypocrite on any occaſion. The caſe is very different, replied my huſband. there is a natural antipathy between your father and him, founded on the oppoſition of their ſentiments. With regard to myſelf, who have no ſyſtems or prejudices, I am certain that he can have no natural averſion to me. No one can hate me, a man without

paſſions

paſſions cannot incur the averſion of any one. But I deprived him of all that he held dear, which he will not readily forgive. He will however conceive the ſtronger affection for me, when he is perfectly convinced that the injury I have done him does not prevent me from looking upon him with an eye of kindneſs If he careſſed me now, he would be a hypocrite, if he never careſſes me, he will be a monſter.

You ſee, my dear Clara, the ſituation we are in, and I begin to think that heaven will bleſs the integrity of our hearts, and the kind intentions of my huſband. But I am too kind to you in entering into all theſe details, you do not deſerve that I ſhould take ſuch pleaſure in converſing with you but I am determined to tell you no more; ſo that if you deſire farther information, you muſt come hither to receive it.

P. S. It is neceſſary, however, to acquaint you with what has paſſed with reſpect to the ſubject of this letter. You know with what indulgence Mr Wolmar received the late confeſſion which our friend's unexpected return obliged me to make. You ſaw with what tenderneſs he endeavoured to dry up my tears and diſſipate my ſhame Whether, as you reaſonably conjectured, I told him nothing new, or whether he was really affected by a proceeding which nothing but ſincere repentance could dictate, he has not only continued to live with me as before, but he even ſeems to have redoubled his attention, his confidence, and eſteem, as if he meant, by his kindneſs, to repay the confuſion which my confeſſion coſt me. My dear

Clara, you know my heart; judge then what an impreſſion ſuch a conduct muſt make!

As ſoon as I found that he was determined to let our old friend come hither, I reſolved, on my part, to take the beſt precautions I could contrive againſt myſelf. which was, to chuſe my huſband himſelf for my confidante, to hold no particular converſation, which I did not communicate to him; and to write no letter, which I did not ſhew to him I even made it a part of my duty to write every letter as if it was not intended for his inſpection, and afterwards to ſhew it to him. You will find an article in the preſent which was penned on this principle: if, while I was writing, I could not forbear thinking that he might read it, yet my conſcience bears witneſs that I did not alter a ſingle word on that account; but when I ſhewed him my letter, he bantered me, and had not the civility to read it.

I confeſs to you, that I was ſomewhat piqued at his refuſal, as if he had doubted my honour. My emotion did not eſcape his notice; and this moſt open and generous man ſoon removed my apprehenſions. Confeſs, ſaid he, that you have ſaid leſs concerning me than uſual in that letter. I owned it, was it decent to ſay much of him, when I intended to ſhew him what I had written? Well, he replied with a ſmile, I had rather that you would talk of me more, and not know what you ſay of me. Afterwards, he continued, in a more ſerious tone, Marriage, ſaid he, is too grave and ſolemn a ſtate to admit of that free communication which tender friendſhip allows. The latter connection often happily,

pily contributes to moderate the rigour of the former, and it may be reaſonable in ſome caſes for a virtuous and diſcreet woman to ſeek for that comfort, intelligence, and advice from a faithful confident, which it might not be proper for her to deſire of her huſband. Though nothing paſſes between you but what you would chuſe to communicate, yet take care not to make it a duty; leſt that duty ſhould become a reſtraint upon you, and your correſpondence grow leſs agreeable by being more diffuſive. Believe me, the open-hearted ſincerity of friendſhip is reſtrained by the preſence of a witneſs, whoever it be. There are a thouſand ſecrets of which three friends ought to participate; but which cannot be communicated but between two. You may impart the ſame things to your friend and to your huſband, but you do not relate them in the ſame manner; and if you will confound theſe diſtinctions, the conſequence will be, that your letters will be addreſſed more to me than her, and that you will not be free from reſtraint either with one or the other. It is as much for my own intereſt as for yours, that I urge theſe reaſons. Do not you perceive that you are already, with good reaſon, apprehenſive of the indelicacy of praiſing me to my face? Why will you deprive yourſelf of the pleaſure of acquainting your friend how tenderly you love your huſband, and me of the ſatisfaction of ſuppoſing that in your moſt private intercourſes you take delight in ſpeaking well of me? Julia! Julia! (added he, preſſing my hand, and looking at me with tenderneſs,) why will you demean yourſelf by taking precautions

ſo

ſo unworthy of you, and will you never learn to make a true eſtimate of your own worth?

My dear friend, it is impoſſible to tell you how this incomparable man behaves to me I no longer bluſh in his preſence. Spite of my frailty, he liſts me above myſelf, and by dint of repoſing confidence in me, teaches me to deſerve it.

LETTER CXXVII.

ANSWER.

HOW! our traveller returned! and have I not yet ſeen him at my feet loaded with the ſpoils of America? But it is not him, I aſſure you, whom I accuſe of this delay for I am ſenſible it is as grievous to him as to me but I find that he has not ſo thoroughly forgotten his former ſtate of ſervility as you pretend, and I complain leſs of his neglect than of your tyranny. It is very extraordinary in you indeed, to deſire ſuch a prude as I am, to make the firſt advances, and run to ſalute a ſwarthy pock-fretten face, which has paſſed four times under the line But you make me ſmile to ſee you in ſuch haſte to ſcold, for fear I ſhould begin firſt. I ſhould be glad to know what pretence you have to make ſuch an attempt? Quarrelling is my talent. I take pleaſure in it, I acquit myſelf to a miracle, and it becomes me, but you, my dear couſin, are a mere novice at the work. If you did but know how graceful you appear in the act of confeſſion, how lovely you look with a ſup-

a ſupplicating eye and an air of confuſion, inſtead of ſcolding, you would ſpend your days in aſking pardon, were it only out of coquetry.

For the preſent, you muſt aſk my pardon in every reſpect. A fine project truly, to chuſe a huſband for a confident, and a moſt obliging precaution indeed for a friendſhip ſo ſacred as ours? Thou faithleſs friend, and puſillanimous woman! on whom can you depend, if you miſtruſt yourſelf and me? Can you, without offence to both, conſidering the ſacred tie under which you live, ſuſpect your own inclinations and my indulgence? I am aſtoniſhed, that the bare idea of admitting a third perſon into the tittle-tattle ſecrets of two women, did not diſguſt you! For my part, I love to prattle with you at my eaſe; but if I thought that the eye of man ever pryed into my letters, I ſhould no longer have any pleaſure in correſponding with you, ſuch a reſerve would inſenſibly introduce a coldneſs between us, and we ſhould have no more regard for each other than two indifferent women. To what inconveniences your ſilly diſtruſt would have expoſed us, if your huſband had not been wiſer than you!

He acted very diſcreetly in not reading your letter. Perhaps he would have been leſs ſatisfied with it than you imagine, and leſs than I am myſelf, who am better capable of judging of your preſent condition, by the ſtate in which I have ſeen you formerly. All thoſe contemplative ſages who have paſſed their lives in the ſtudy of the human heart, are leſs acquainted with the real ſymptoms of love, than the moſt ſhallow woman, if ſhe has any ſenſibility. Mr

Wolmar

Wolmar would immediately have obſerved that our friend was the ſubject of your whole letter, and he would not have ſeen the poſtſcript, in which you do not once mention him. If you had written this poſtſcript ten years ago, my dear, I cannot tell how you would have managed, but your friend would certainly have been crowded into ſome corner, eſpecially as there was no huſband to overlook it.

Mr Wolmar would have obſerved farther with what attention you examined his gueſt, and the pleaſure you take in deſcribing his perſon; but he might devour Plato and Ariſtotle, before he would know that we *look* at a lover, but do not *examine* him. All examination requires a degree of indifference, which we never feel when we behold the object of our paſſion.

In ſhort, he would imagine that all the alterations you remark might have eſcaped another, and I on the contrary was afraid of finding that they had eſcaped you However your gueſt may be altered from what he was, he would appear the ſame, if your affections were not altered. You turn away your eyes whenever he looks at you this is a very good ſymptom. You *turn them away*, couſin? You do not now *caſt them down*? Surely you have not miſtaken one word for another. Do you think that our philoſopher would have perceived that diſtinction?

Another circumſtance very likely to diſturb a huſband, is a kind of tenderneſs and affection, which ſtill remains in your ſtyle when you ſpeak of the object who was once ſo dear to you. One who reads your letters, or hears

you

you ſpeak, ought to be well acquainted with you, not to be miſtaken with regard to your ſentiments; he ought to know that it is only a friend to whom you are ſpeaking, or that you ſpeak in the ſame manner of all your friends; but as to that, it is the natural effect of your diſpoſition, with which your huſband is too well acquainted to be alarmed How is it poſſible but that, in a mind of ſuch tenderneſs, pure friendſhip will bear ſome reſemblance to love?

Pray obſerve, my dear couſin, that all I ſay to you on this head ought to inſpire you with freſh courage. Your conduct is diſcreet, and that is a great deal. I uſed to truſt only to your virtue; but I begin now to rely on your reaſon · I conſider your cure at preſent, though not perfect, yet as eaſy to be accompliſhed; and you have now made a ſufficient progreſs, to render you inexcuſable if you do not complete it.

Before I came to your poſtſcript, I remarked the paſſage which you had the ſincerity not to ſuppreſs or alter, though conſcious that it would be open to your huſband's inſpection I am certain, that if he had read it, it would, if poſſible, have doubled his eſteem for you, nevertheleſs it would have given him no great pleaſure. Upon the whole, your letter was very well calculated to make him place an entire confidence in your conduct, but tended at the ſame time to give him uneaſineſs with reſpect to your inclinations I own, thoſe marks of the ſmall-pox, which you view ſo much, give me ſome apprehenſions, love never yet contri-

ved

ved a more dangerous diſguiſe. I know that this would be of no conſequence to any other, but always remember, Julia, that ſhe who was not to be ſeduced by the youth and fine figure of her lover, was loſt when ſhe reflected on the ſufferings he had endured for her. Providence no doubt intended that he ſhould retain the marks of that diſtemper, to exerciſe your virtue; and that you ſhould be free from them, in order to put his to the proof.

I come now to the principal ſubject of your letter; you know that on the receipt of our friend's, I flew to you immediately; it was a matter of importance. But at preſent, if you knew in what difficulties that ſhort abſence has involved me, and how many things I have to do at once, you would be ſenſible how impoſſible it is for me to leave my houſe again, without expoſing myſelf to freſh inconveniences, and putting myſelf under a neceſſity of paſſing the winter here again, which is neither for your intereſt or mine. Is it not better to deprive ourſelves of the pleaſure of a haſty interview of two or three days, that we may be together for ſix months? I imagine likewiſe that it would not be improper for me to have a little particular and private converſation with our philoſopher: partly to ſound his inclinations, and confirm his mind, partly to give him ſome uſeful advice with regard to the conduct he ſhould obſerve towards your huſband, and even towards you, for I do not ſuppoſe that you can talk to him with freedom on that ſubject, and I can perceive, even from your letter, that he has need of counſel. We have been ſo long uſed to govern

govern him, that we are in conſcience reſponſible for his behaviour; and till he has regained the free uſe of his reaſon, we muſt ſupply the deficiency. For my own part, it is a charge I ſhall always undertake with pleaſure. for he has paid ſuch deference to my advice as I ſhall never forget, and ſince my huſband is no more, there is not a man in the world whom I eſteem and love ſo much as himſelf. I have likewiſe reſerved for him the pleaſure of doing me ſome little ſervices here. I have a great many papers in confuſion, which he will help me to regulate; and I have ſome troubleſome affairs in hand, in which I ſhall have occaſion for his diligence and underſtanding. As to the reſt, I do not propoſe to detain him above five or ſix days at moſt, and perhaps I may ſend him to you the next day. For I have too much vanity to wait till he is ſeized with impatience to return, and I have too much diſcernment to be deceived in that caſe.

Fail not, therefore, as ſoon as he is recovered, to ſend him to me; that is, to let him come, or I ſhall give over all raillery You know very well, that if I laugh whilſt I cry, and yet am not the leſs in affliction, ſo I laugh likewiſe at the ſame time that I ſcold, and yet am not the leſs in a paſſion If you are diſcreet, and do things with a good grace, I promiſe you that I will ſend him back to you with a pretty little preſent, which will give you pleaſure, and very great pleaſure, but if you ſuffer me to languiſh with impatience, I aſſure you that you ſhall have nothing.

P. S A propos, tell me, does our ſeaman ſmoke? does he ſwear? does he drink brandy? Does he wear a great cutlaſs? has he the look of a bucanier? O how I long to ſee what ſort of an air a man has who comes from the Antipodes!

LETTER CXXVIII.

CLARA *to* JULIA.

HERE, take back your ſlave, my dear couſin. He has been mine for theſe eight days paſt, and he bears his chains with ſo good a grace, that he ſeems altogether formed for captivity. Return me thanks that I did not keep him ſtill eight days longer; for, without offence to you, if I had kept him till he began to grow tired of me, I ſhould not have ſent him back ſo ſoon. I therefore detained him without any ſcruple, but I was ſo ſcrupulous, however, that I durſt not let him lodge in my houſe. I have ſometimes perceived in myſelf that haughtineſs of ſoul, which diſdains ſervile ceremonies, and which is ſo conſiſtent with virtue. In this inſtance, however, I have been more reſerved than uſual, without knowing why: and all that I know for certain is, that I am more diſpoſed to cenſure this reſerve than to applaud it.

But can you gueſs what induced our friend to ſtay here ſo patiently? Firſt, he had the pleaſure of my company, and I preſume that circumſtance alone was ſufficient to make him patient. Then he ſaved me a great deal of confuſion,

ſion, and was of ſervice to me in my buſineſs; a friend is never tired of ſuch offices. A third reaſon which you have probably conjectured, though you pretend not to know it, is, that he talked to me about you, and if we ſubſtract the time employed in this converſation from the whole time which he has paſſed here, you will find that there is very little remaining to be placed to my account But what an odd whim, to leave you, in order to have the pleaſure of talking of you! Not ſo odd as may be imagined. He is under conſtraint in your company; he muſt be continually upon his guard, the leaſt indiſcretion would become a crime; and in thoſe dangerous moments, minds endued with ſentiments of honour, never fail to recollect their duty, but when we are remote from the object of our affections, we may indulge ourſelves with feaſting our imaginations If we ſtifle an idea when it becomes criminal, why ſhould we reproach ourſelves for having entertained it when it was not ſo? Can the pleaſing recollection of innocent pleaſures ever be a crime? This, I imagine, is a way of reaſoning, which you will not acquieſce in, but which nevertheleſs may be admitted. He began, as I may ſay, to run over the whole courſe of his former affections The days of his youth paſſed over a ſecond time in our converſation He renewed all his confidence in me; he recalled the happy time, in which he was permitted to love you, he painted to my imagination all the charms of an innocent paſſion———Without doubt, he embelliſhed them!

He ſaid little of his preſent condition with re-

gard to you; and what he mentioned rather denoted reſpect and admiration, than love, ſo that I have the pleaſure to think that he will return, much more confident as to the nature of his affections, than when he came hither. Not but that, when you are the ſubject, one may perceive at the bottom of that ſuſceptible mind, a certain tenderneſs, which friendſhip alone, though not leſs affecting, ſtill expreſſes in a different manner, but I have long obſerved that it is impoſſible to ſee you, or to think of you with indifference; and if to that general affection which the ſight of you inſpires, we add the more tender impreſſion which an indelible recollection muſt have left upon his mind, we ſhall find that it is difficult and almoſt impoſſible, that, with the moſt rigid virtue, he ſhould be otherwiſe than he is. I have fully interrogated him, carefully obſerved him, and watched him narrowly, I have examined him with the utmoſt attention I cannot read his inmoſt thoughts, nor do I believe them more intelligible to himſelf. but I can anſwer, at leaſt, that he is ſtruck with a ſenſe of his duty and of yours, and that the idea of Julia abandoned and contemptible, would be more horrid than his own annihilation. My dear couſin, I have but one piece of advice to give you, and I deſire you to attend to it, avoid any detail concerning what is paſſed, and I will take upon me to anſwer for the future

As to the reſtitution which you mentioned, you muſt think no more of it After having exhauſted all the reaſons I could ſuggeſt, I intreated him, preſſed him, conjured him, but in

vain

vain. I pouted, I even kiſſed him; I took hold of both his hands, and would have fallen on my knees to him, if he would have ſuffered me: but he would not ſo much as hear me. He carried the obſtinacy of his humour ſo far, as to ſwear that he would ſooner conſent never to ſee you again, than part with your picture. At laſt, in a fit of paſſion, he made me feel it It was next his heart. There, ſaid he, with a ſigh which almoſt ſtopped his breath, there is the picture, the only comfort I have left, and of which nevertheleſs you would deprive me, be aſſured that it ſhall never be torn from me, but at the expence of my life. Believe me, Julia, we had better be diſcreet, and ſuffer him to keep the picture. After all, where is the importance? His obſtinacy will be his puniſhment

After he had thoroughly unburdened and eaſed his mind, he appeared ſo compoſed, that I ventured to talk to him about his ſituation I found that neither time nor reaſon had made any alteration in his ſyſtem, and that he confined his whole ambition to the paſſing his life in the ſervice of Lord B——. I could not but approve ſuch honourable intentions, ſo conſiſtent with his character, and ſo becoming that gratitude, which is due to ſuch inexhauſted kindneſs. He told me that you were of the ſame opinion, but that Mr Wolmar was ſilent A ſudden thought ſtrikes me From your huſband's ſingular conduct, and other ſymptoms, I ſuſpect that he has ſome ſecret deſign upon our friend, which he does not diſcloſe Let us leave him to himſelf, and truſt to his diſcretion The man-

ner in which he behaves, ſufficiently proves, that, if my conjecture is right, he meditates nothing but what will be for the advantage of the perſon about whom he has taken ſuch uncommon pains

You gave a very juſt deſcription of his figure and of his manners, which proves that you have obſerved him more attentively than I ſhould have imagined. But do not you find that his continued anxieties have rendered his countenance more expreſſive than it uſed to be? Notwithſtanding the account you gave me, I was afraid to find him tinctured with that affected politeneſs, thoſe apiſh manners which people ſeldom fail to contract at Paris, and which, in the round of trifles which employ an indolent day, are vainly diſplayed under different modes. Whether it be that ſome minds are not ſuſceptible of this poliſh, or whether the ſea air entirely effaced it, I could not diſcover in him the leaſt marks of affectation, and all the zeal he expreſſed for me, ſeemed to flow entirely from the dictates of his heart He talked to me about my poor huſband; but inſtead of comforting me, he choſe to join with me in bewailing him, and never once attempted to make any fine ſpeeches on the ſubject. He careſſed my daughter, but inſtead of admiring her as I do, he reproached me with her failings, and, like you, complained that I ſpoiled her, he entered into my concerns with great zeal, and was ſeldom of my opinion in any reſpect. Moreover, the wind might have blown my eyes out, before he would have thought of drawing a curtain I might have been fatigued to death in going from

one

one room to another, before he would have had gallantry enough to have ſtretched out his hand, covered with the ſkirt of his coat, to ſupport me: my fan lay upon the ground yeſterday for more than a ſecond, and he did not fly from the bottom of the room, as if he was going to ſnatch it out of the fire. In the morning, before he came to viſit me, he never once ſent to inquire how I did When we are walking together, he does not affect to have his hat nailed upon his head, to ſhew that he knows the pink of the mode *. At table, I frequently aſked him for his ſnuff-box, which he always gave me in his hand, and never preſented it upon a plate, like a *fine gentleman*, or rather like a footman He did not fail to drink my health twice at leaſt at dinner, and I will lay a wager, that if he ſtays with us this winter, we ſhall ſee him ſit round the fire with us, and warm himſelf like an old cit. You laugh, couſin, but ſhew me one of our gallants newly arrived from Paris, who preſerves the ſame manly deportment. As to the reſt, I think you muſt allow that our philoſopher is altered for the worſe in one reſpect, which is, that he takes rather more notice of people who ſpeak to him, which he cannot do but to your prejudice, nevertheleſs, I hope

* At Paris, they pique themſelves on rendering ſociety eaſy and commodious, and this eaſe is made to conſiſt of a great number of rules, equally important with the above In good company, every thing is regulated according to form and order All theſe ceremonies are in and out of faſhion as quick as lightning. The ſcience of polite life conſiſts in being always upon the watch, to ſeize them as they fly, to affect them, and ſhew that we are acquainted with the mode of the day.

I hope that I ſhall be able to reconcile him to Madam Belon. For my part, I think him altered for the better, becauſe he is more ſerious than ever. My dear, take great care of him till my arrival He is juſt the man I could wiſh to have the pleaſure of plaguing all day long.

Admire my diſcretion, I have taken no notice yet of the preſent I ſent you, and which is an earneſt of another to come. But you have received it before you opened my letter, and you know how much, and with what reaſon I idoliſe it, you, whoſe avarice is ſo anxious about this preſent, you muſt acknowledge that I have performed more than I promiſed Ah! the dear little creature! While you are reading this, ſhe is already in your arms; ſhe is happier than her mother, but in two months time I ſhall be happier than ſhe, for I ſhall be more ſenſible of my felicity Alas! dear couſin, do not you poſſeſs me wholly already? Where you and my daughter are, what part of me is wanting? There ſhe is, the dear little infant; take her as your own, I give her up, I put her into your hands, I conſign all maternal authority over to you, correct my failings, take that charge upon yourſelf, of which I acquitted myſelf ſo little to your liking henceforward be as a mother to her, who is one day to be your daughter-in-law; and to render her dearer to me ſtill, make another Julia of her if poſſible She is like you in the face already, as to her temper, I gueſs that ſhe will be grave and thoughtful, when you have corrected thoſe little caprices which I have been accuſed of encouraging, you will find that my

my daughter will give herſelf the airs of my couſin, but ſhe will be happier than Julia in having leſs tears to ſhed, and leſs ſtruggles to encounter. Do you know that ſhe cannot be any longer without her little M—, and that it is partly for that reaſon I ſend her back? I had a converſation with her yeſterday, which threw our friends into an immoderate fit of laughing. Firſt, ſhe leaves me without the leaſt regret, I, who am her humble ſervant all day long, and can deny her nothing ſhe aſks for, and you, of whom ſhe is afraid, and who anſwer her, *No*, twenty times a-day, you, by way of excellence, are her little mamma, whom ſhe viſits with pleaſure, and whoſe denials ſhe likes better than all my fine preſents: when I told her that I was going to ſend her to you, ſhe was tranſported as you may imagine, but to perplex her, I told her that you in return was to ſend me little M— in her ſtead, and that was not agreeable to her She was quite at a nonplus, and aſked what I would do with him I told her that I would take him to myſelf ſhe began to pout. "Harriot, (ſaid I,) will not you give up your little M—— to me?" No, ſaid ſhe, ſomewhat coldly. "No? But if I will not give him up neither, who ſhall ſettle it between us?" Mamma, my little mamma ſhall ſettle it "Then I ſhall have the preference, for you know ſhe will do whatever I deſire Oh, but mamma will do nothing but what is right! "And do you think I ſhould deſire what is wrong!" The ſly little jade began to ſmile "But after all, (continued I,) for what reaſon ſhould ſhe refuſe to give me little M——?" Becauſe he is not fit for you. "And

why

why is he not fit for me?" Another arch ſmile, as full of meaning as the former. "Tell me honeſtly, is it not becauſe you think me too old for him?" No, mamma, but he is too young for you . . . This from a child but ſeven years old .

I amuſed myſelf with piquing her ſtill farther. "My dear Harriot, (ſaid I, aſſuming a ſerious air,) I aſſure you that he is not fit for you neither." Why ſo, ſhe cried, as if ſhe had been ſuddenly alarmed. "Becauſe he is too giddy for you." Oh, mamma, is that all? I will make him wiſe. "But if unfortunately he ſhould make you fooliſh?" Then, mamma, I ſhould be like you. "Like me, impertinence?" Yes, mamma, you are ſaying all day that you are fooliſhly fond of me. Well then I will be fooliſhly fond of him, that is all.

I know you do not approve of this pretty prattle, and that you will ſoon know how to check it. Neither will I juſtify it, though I own it delights me, but I only mention it to convince you, that my daughter is already in love with her little M——, and that if he is two years younger, ſhe is not unworthy of that authority, which ſhe may claim by right of ſeniority. I perceive likewiſe, by oppoſing your example and my own to that of your poor mother's, that where the woman governs, the houſe is not the worſe managed. Farewell, my dear friend, farewell, my conſtant companion! The time is approaching, and the vintage ſhall not be gathered without me.

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LETTER CXXIX.

To Lord B——.

WHAT pleaſures, (alas too late enjoyed,) have I taſted theſe three weeks paſt! How delightful to paſs one day in the boſom of calm friendſhip, ſecure from the tempeſts of impetuous paſſion! What a pleaſing and affecting ſcene, my Lord, is a plain and well-regulated family, where order, peace, and innocence, reign throughout; where, without pomp or retinue, every thing is aſſembled which can contribute to the real felicity of mankind! The country, the retirement, the ſeaſon, the vaſt body of water which opens to my view, the wild proſpect of the mountains, every thing conſpires to recal to my mind the delightful iſland of Tinian. I flatter myſelf that the earneſt prayers, which I there ſo often repeated, are now accompliſhed. I live here agreeably to my taſte, and enjoy ſociety ſuitable to my liking. I only want the company of two perſons to complete my happineſs, and I hope to ſee them here.

In the mean time, till you and Mrs Orbe come to perfect thoſe charming and innocent pleaſures, which I begin to reliſh here, I will endeavour, by way of detail, to give you an idea of that domeſtic œconomy, which proclaims the happineſs of the maſter and miſtreſs, and communicates their felicity to every one under their roof. I hope that my reflections may one day be of uſe to you, with reſpect to the project you have

have in view, and this hope encourages me to purſue them.

It is needleſs to give you a deſcription of Clarens houſe. You know it. You can tell how delightful it is, what intereſting recollections it preſents to my mind, you can judge how dear it muſt be to me, both on account of the preſent ſcenes it exhibits, and of thoſe which it recalls to my mind Mrs Wolmar, with good reaſon, prefers this abode to that of Etange, a ſuperb and magnificent caſtle, but old, gloomy, and inconvenient, its ſituation being far inferior to the country round Clarens.

Since Mr and Mrs Wolmar have fixed their reſidence here, they have converted to uſe every thing which ſerved only for ornament. It is no longer a houſe for ſhew, but for convenience. They have ſhut up a long range of rooms, to alter the inconvenient ſituation of the doors, they have cut off others that were over-ſized, that the apartments might be better diſtributed. Inſtead of rich and antique furniture, they have ſubſtituted what is neat and convenient. Every thing here is pleaſant and agreeable, every thing breathes an air of plenty and propriety, without any appearance of pomp and luxury There is not a ſingle room, in which you do not immediately recollect that you are in the country, but in which, nevertheleſs, you will find all the conveniences you meet with in town The ſame alterations are obſervable without doors The yard has been enlarged at the expence of the coach-houſes. Inſtead of an old tattered billiard-table, they have made a fine preſs, and the ſpot which uſed to be filled with ſcreaming

pea-

peacocks, which they have parted with, is converted into a dairy The kitchen-garden was too ſmall for the kitchen, they have made another out of a flower-garden, but ſo convenient, and ſo well laid out, that the ſpot, thus tranſformed, looks more agreeable to the eye than before Inſtead of the mournful yews which covered the wall, they have planted good fruit-trees In the room of the uſeleſs Indian *black-berry*, fine young mulberry-trees now begin to ſhade the yard, and they have planted two rows of walnut-trees quite to the road, in the place of ſome old linden trees which bordered the avenue. They have throughout ſubſtituted the uſeful in the room of the agreeable, and yet the agreeable has gained by the alteration. For my own part, at leaſt, I think that the noiſes in the yard, ſuch as the crowing of the cocks, the lowing of the cattle, the harneſs of the carts, the rural repaſts, the return of the huſbandmen, and all the train of ruſtic œconomy, give the houſe a more lively, animated and gay appearance, than it had in its former ſtate of mournful dignity.

Their eſtate is not out upon leaſe, but they are their own farmers, and the cultivation of it employs a great deal of their time, and makes a great part both of their pleaſure and profit. The manor of Etange is nothing but meadow, paſture, and wood. but the produce of Clarens conſiſts of vineyards, which are conſiderable objects, and in which the difference of culture produces more ſenſible effects than in corn, which is a farther reaſon why, in point of œconomy, they ſhould prefer the latter as a place

of reſidence. Nevertheleſs, they generally go to Etange every year at harveſt-time, and Mr Wolmar viſits it frequently It is a maxim with them to cultivate their lands to the utmoſt they will produce, not for the ſake of extraordinary profit, but as the means of employing more hands. Mr Wolmar maintains, that the produce of the earth is in proportion to the number of hands employed; the better it is tilled, it yields the greater increaſe; and the ſurplus of its produce furniſhes the means of cultivating it ſtill farther; the more it is ſtocked with men and cattle, the greater abundance it yields for their ſupport No one can tell, ſays he, where this continual and reciprocal increaſe of produce and of labour may end. On the contrary, land neglected loſes its fertility; the fewer men a country produces, the leſs proviſion it furniſhes The ſcarcity of inhabitants is the reaſon why it is inſufficient to maintain the few it has, and in every country which tends to depopulation, the people will ſooner or later die of famine

Therefore having a great deal of land, which they cultivate with the utmoſt induſtry, they require, beſides the ſervants in the yard, a great number of day-labourers; which procures them the pleaſure of maintaining a great number of people, without any inconvenience to themſelves. In the choice of their labourers, they always prefer neighbours, and thoſe of the ſame place, to ſtrangers and foreigners Though by this means they may ſometimes be loſers in not chuſing the moſt robuſt, yet this loſs is ſoon made up by the affection which this preference inſpires in thoſe whom they chuſe, by the advantage likewiſe of having

having them always about them, and of being able to depend on them at all times, though they keep them in pay but part of the year

With theſe labourers they always make two prices One is a ſtrict payment of right, the current price of the country, which they engage to pay them when they hire them. The other, which is more liberal, is a payment of generoſity, it is beſtowed only as they are found to deſerve it, and it ſeldom happens that they do not earn the ſurplus for Mr Wolmar is juſt and ſtrict, and never ſuffers inſtitutions of grace and favour to degenerate into cuſtom and abuſe. Over theſe labourers are placed overſeers, who watch and encourage them. Theſe overſeers work along with the reſt, and are intereſted in their labour, by a little augmentation which is made to their wages for every advantage that is reaped from their induſtry. Beſides, Mr Wolmar viſits them almoſt every day himſelf, ſometimes often in a day, and his wife loves to be with him in theſe walks. In times of extraordinary buſineſs, Julia every week beſtows ſome little gratifications to ſuch of the labourers, or other ſervants, as, in the judgment of their maſter, have been moſt induſtrious for the laſt week All theſe means of promoting emulation, though ſeemingly expenſive, when uſed with juſtice and diſcretion, inſenſibly make people laborious and diligent, and in the end bring in more than is diſburſed; but as they only turn to profit by time and perſeverance, few people know any thing of them, or are willing to make uſe of them.

But the moſt effectual method of all, which is peculiar to Mrs Wolmar, and which they who

are bent on œconomy ſeldom think of, is that of gaining the hearts of thoſe good people, by making them the objects of her affection. She does not think it ſufficient to reward their induſtry by giving them money, but ſhe thinks herſelf bound to do farther ſervices to thoſe who have contributed to her's Labourers, domeſtics, all who ſerve her, if it be but for a day, become her children, ſhe takes part in their pleaſures, their cares, and their fortune, ſhe inquires into their affairs, and makes their intereſts her own, ſhe engages in a thouſand concerns for them, ſhe gives them her advice, ſhe accommodates their differences, and does not ſhew the affability of her diſpoſition in ſmooth and fruitleſs ſpeeches, but in real ſervices and continual acts of benevolence They, on their parts, leave every thing to ſerve her, on the leaſt motion They fly when ſhe ſpeaks to them, her look alone animates their zeal; in her preſence they are contented; in her abſence they talk of her, and are eager to be employed. Her charms and her manner of converſing do a great deal, her gentleneſs and her virtues ſtill more. Ah! my Lord, what a powerful and adorable empire is that of benevolent beauty!

With reſpect to their perſonal attendants, they have within doors eight ſervants, three women and five men, without reckoning the baron's valet de chambre, or the ſervants in the out-houſes It ſeldom happens that people, who have but few domeſtics, are ill ſerved but from the uncommon zeal of theſe ſervants, one would conclude that each thought himſelf charged with the buſineſs of the other ſeven; and from the har-

harmony among them, one would imagine that the whole buſineſs was done by one man. You never ſee them in the out-houſes idle and unemployed, or playing in the court-yard, but always about ſome uſeful employment, they aſſiſt in the yard, in the cellar, and in the kitchen. The gardener has nobody under him but them, and what is moſt agreeable, you ſee them do all this chearfully and with pleaſure.

They take them young, in order to form them to their minds. They do not follow the maxim here, which prevails at Paris and London, of chuſing domeſtics ready formed, that is to ſay, complete raſcals, runners of quality, who, in every family they go through, catch the failings both of maſter and man, and make a trade of ſerving every body, without being attached to any one. There can be neither honeſty, fidelity, or zeal, among ſuch fellows, and this collection of rable ſerves to ruin the maſters, and corrupt the children, in all wealthy families. Here, the choice of domeſtics is conſidered as an article of importance. They do not regard them merely as mercenaries, from whom they only require a ſtipulated ſervice; but as members of a family, which, ſhould they be ill choſen, might be ruined by that means. The firſt thing they require of them is to be honeſt, the next is to love their maſter, and the third to ſerve him to his liking, but where a maſter is reaſonable, and a ſervant intelligent, the third is the conſequence of the two firſt. Therefore they do not take them from town, but from the country. This is the firſt place they live in, and it will aſſuredly be the laſt if they are good for any

thing They take them out of ſome numerous family overſtocked with children, whoſe parents come to offer them of their own accord. They chuſe them young, well made, healthy, and of an agreeable countenance. Mr Wolmar interrogates and examines them, and then preſents them to his wife. If they prove agreeable to both, they are received at firſt upon trial, afterwards they are admitted among the number of ſervants, or more properly the children of the family, and they employ ſome days in teaching them their duty with a great deal of care and patience The ſervice is ſo ſimple, ſo equal and uniform, the maſter and miſtreſs are ſo little ſubject to whims and caprice, and the ſervants ſo ſoon conceive an affection for them, that their buſineſs is ſoon learnt Their condition is agreeable, they find conveniences which they had not at home, but they are not ſuffered to be enervated by idleneſs, the parent of all vice. They do not allow them to become gentlemen, and to grow proud in their ſervice. They continue to work as they did with their own family, in fact, they do but change their father and mother, and get more wealthy parents. They do not therefore hold their old ruſtic employments in contempt Whenever they leave this place, there is not one of them who had not rather turn peaſant, than take any other employment. In ſhort, I never ſaw a family, where every one acquits himſelf ſo well in his ſervice, and thinks ſo little of the trouble of ſervitude.

Thus by training up their ſervants themſelves, in this diſcreet manner, they guard againſt the objection which is ſo very trifling, and ſo frequently

quently made "I ſhall only bring them up for "the ſervice of others" Train them properly, one might anſwer, and they will never ſerve any one elſe. If in bringing them up, you ſolely regard your own benefit, they have a right to conſult their own intereſt in quitting you, but if you ſeem to conſider their advantage, they will remain conſtantly attached to you. It is the intention alone which conſtitutes the obligation, and he who is indirectly benefited by an act of kindneſs, wherein I meant to ſerve myſelf only, owes me no obligation whatever.

As a double preventive againſt this inconvenience, Mr and Mrs Wolmar take another method, which appears to me extremely prudent. At the firſt eſtabliſhment of their houſehold, they calculated what number of ſervants their fortune would allow them to keep, and they found it to amount to fifteen or ſixteen, in order to be better ſerved, they made a reduction of half that number; ſo that with leſs retinue, they have more exact ſervice. To be more effectually ſerved ſtill, they have made it the intereſt of their ſervants to continue with them a long time. When a domeſtic firſt enters into their ſervice, he receives the common wages, but thoſe wages are augmented every year by a twentieth part, ſo that at the end of twenty years, they will be more than doubled, and the charge of keeping theſe ſervants will be nearly the ſame, in proportion to the maſter's circumſtances. But there is no need of being a deep algebraiſt to diſcover, that the expence of this augmentation is more in appearance than reality, that there will be but few to whom double wages will be paid, and

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that if they were paid to all the ſervants, yet the benefit of having been well ſerved for twenty years paſt, would more than compenſate the extraordinary expence. You will be ſenſible, my Lord, that this is a certain expedient of making ſervants grow continually more and more careful, and of attaching them to you by attaching yourſelf to them There is not only prudence, but juſtice, in ſuch an eſtabliſhment. Is it reaſonable that a new comer, who has no affection for you, and who is perhaps an unworthy object, ſhould receive the ſame ſalary, at his firſt entrance into the family, as an old ſervant, whoſe zeal and fidelity have been tried in a long courſe of ſervices, and who beſides, being grown in years, draws near the time when he will be incapable of providing for himſelf? The latter reaſon, however, muſt not be brought into the account, and you may eaſily imagine that ſuch a benevolent maſter and miſtreſs do not fail to diſcharge that duty, which many who are devoid of charity, fulfill out of oſtentation, and you may ſuppoſe that they do not abandon thoſe whoſe infirmities or old age render them incapable of ſervice

I can give you a very ſtriking inſtance of their attention to this duty. The Baron d'Etange being deſirous to recompenſe the long ſervices of his valet de chambre, by procuring him an honourable retreat, had the intereſt to obtain for him the L L. E. E an eaſy and lucrative poſt. Julia has juſt now received a moſt affecting letter from this old ſervant, in which he intreats her to get him excuſed from accepting this employment. "I am in years, ſays he, I have

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loſt all my family, I have no relations but my maſter and his family, all my hope is to end my days quietly in the houſe where I have paſſed the greateſt part of them Often, dear madam, as I have held you in my arms when but an infant, I prayed to heaven that I might one day hold your little ones in the ſame manner My prayers have been heard, do not deny me the happineſs of ſeeing them grow and proſper like you I who have been accuſtomed to a quiet family, where ſhall I find ſuch another place of reſt in my old age? Be ſo kind to write to the Baron in my behalf. If he is diſſatisfied with me, let him turn me off, and give me no employment, but if I have ſerved him faithfully for theſe forty years paſt, let him allow me to end my days in his ſervice and yours, he cannot reward me better" It is needleſs to aſk if Julia wrote to the Baron or not I perceive that ſhe would be as unwilling to part with this good man, as he would be to leave her Am I wrong, my Lord, when I compare a maſter and miſtreſs, thus beloved, to good parents, and their ſervants to obedient children? You ſee it is in this light that they conſider themſelves

There is not a ſingle inſtance in this family of a ſervant's giving warning It is even very ſeldom that they are threatened with a diſmiſſion. A menance of this kind alarms them in proportion as their ſervice is pleaſant and agreeable. The beſt ſubjects are always the ſooneſt alarmed, and there is never any occaſion to come to extremities but with ſuch as are not worth regretting They have likewiſe a rule in this reſpect

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When Mr Wolmar ſays, "I diſcharge you," they may then implore Mrs Wolmar to intercede for them, and through her interceſſion may be reſtored, and if ſhe gives them warning, it is irrevocable, and they have no favour to hope for. This agreement between them is very well calculated both to moderate the extreme confidence which her gentleneſs might beget in them, and the violent apprehenſions they might conceive from his inflexibility. Such a warning nevertheleſs is exceſſively dreaded from a juſt and diſpaſſionate maſter for beſides that they are not certain of obtaining favour, and that the ſame perſon is never pardoned twice, they forfeit the right which they acquire from their long ſervice, by having had warning given, and, when they are reſtored, they begin as it were a new ſervice. This prevents the old ſervants from growing inſolent; and makes them more circumſpect, in proportion as they have more to loſe

The three maid-ſervants are, the chamber maid, the governeſs, and the cook. The latter is a country-girl, very proper and well qualified for the place, whom Mrs Wolmar has inſtructed in cookery for in this country, which is as yet in ſome meaſure in a ſtate of ſimplicity, young ladies learn to do that buſineſs themſelves, that when they keep houſe, they may be able to direct their ſervants; and conſequently are leſs liable to be impoſed upon by them. B—— is no longer the chamber-maid, they have ſent her back to Etange, where ſhe was born, they have again entruſted her with the care of the caſtle, and the ſuperintendence of the receipts, which

makes her in ſome degree comptroller of the houſehold. Mr Wolmar intreated his wife to make this regulation, but it was a long time before ſhe could reſolve to part with an old ſervant of her mother's, though ſhe had more than one reaſon to be diſpleaſed with her. But after their laſt conference, ſhe gave her conſent, and B—— is gone. This girl is clever and honeſt, but babbling and indiſcreet. I ſuſpect that ſhe has, more than once, betrayed the ſecrets of her miſtreſs; that Mr Wolmar is ſenſible of it, and to prevent her being guilty of the ſame indiſcretion with reſpect to a ſtranger, he has prudently taken this method to avail himſelf of her good qualities, without running any hazard from her failings. She who is taken in her room, is that Fanny, of whom you have often heard me ſpeak with ſo much pleaſure. Notwithſtanding Julia's prediction, her favours, her father's kindneſs and yours, this deſerving and diſcreet young woman has not been happy in her connection. Claude Anet, who endured adverſity ſo bravely, could not ſupport a more proſperous ſtate. When he found himſelf at eaſe, he neglected his buſineſs, and his affairs being quite embarraſſed, he fled the country, leaving his wife with an infant whom ſhe has ſince loſt. Julia having taken her home, inſtructed her in the buſineſs of a chamber-maid, and I was never more agreeably ſurpriſed than to find her ſettled in her employment, the firſt day of my arrival. Mr Wolmar pays great regard to her, and they have both entruſted her with the charge of ſuperintending their children, and of having an eye likewiſe over their governeſs,

neſs, who is a ſimple credulous country laſs, but attentive, patient, and tractable, ſo that, in ſhort, they have omitted no precaution to prevent the vices of the town from creeping into a family, where the maſter and miſtreſs are ſtrangers to them, and will not ſuffer them under their roof.

Though there is but one table among all the ſervants, yet there is but little communication between the men and women, and this they conſider as a point of great importance Mr Wolmar is not of the ſame opinion with thoſe maſters, who are indifferent to every thing which does not immediately concern their intereſts, and who only deſire to be well ſerved, without troubling themſelves about what their ſervants do beſides. He thinks, on the contrary, that they who regard nothing but their own ſervice cannot be well ſerved Too cloſe a connection between the two ſexes, frequently occaſions miſchief. The diſorders of moſt families ariſe from the rendezvous which are held in the chamber-maid's apartment. If there is one whom the ſteward happens to be fond of, he does not fail to ſeduce her at the expence of his maſter A good underſtanding among the men, or among the women, is not alone ſufficiently firm to produce any material conſequences But it is always between the men and the women that thoſe ſecret monopolies are eſtabliſhed, which in the end ruin the moſt wealthy families They pay a particular attention therefore to the diſcretion and modeſty of the women, not only from principles of honeſty and morality, but from well-judged motives of intereſt For

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whatever ſome may pretend, no one who does not love his duty, can diſcharge it as he ought; and none ever loved their duty, who were devoid of honour

They do not, to prevent any dangerous intimacy between the two ſexes, reſtrain them by poſitive rules which they might be tempted to violate in ſecret, but without any ſeeming intention, they eſtabliſh good cuſtoms, which are more powerful than authority itſelf. They do not forbid any intercourſe between them, but it is contrived in ſuch a manner that they have no occaſion or inclination to ſee each other. This is effectuated by making their buſineſs, their habits, their taſtes, and their pleaſures, entirely different To maintain the admirable order which they have eſtabliſhed, they are ſenſible that in a well regulated family there ſhould be as little correſpondence as poſſible between the two ſexes. They, who would accuſe their maſter of caprice, was he to enforce ſuch a rule by way of injunction, ſubmit, without regret, to a manner of life which is not poſitively preſcribed to them, but which they themſelves conceive to be the beſt and moſt natural. Julia inſiſts that it muſt be ſo in fact, ſhe maintains, that neither love nor conjugal union is the reſult of a continual commerce between the ſexes. In her opinion, huſband and wife were deſigned to live together, but not to live in the ſame manner They ought to act in concert, without doing the ſame things The kind of life, ſays ſhe, which would delight the one, would be inſupportable to the other, the inclinations which nature has given them, are as different as the

occupation ſhe has aſſigned them: they differ no leſs in their amuſements than in their duties. In a word, both contribute to the common good by different ways, and the proper diſtribution of their ſeveral cares and employments is the ſtrongeſt tie that binds their union.

For my own part, I confeſs that my obſervations are much in favour of this maxim. In fact, is it not the general practice, except among the French, and thoſe who imitate them, for the men and women to live ſeparately? If they ſee each other, it is rather by ſhort interviews, and as it were by ſtealth, as the Spartans viſited their wives, than by an indiſcreet and conſtant intercourſe, ſufficient to confound and deſtroy the wiſeſt bounds of diſtinction which nature has ſet between them. We do not, even among the ſavages, ſee men and women intermingle indiſcriminately. In the evening, the family meet together, every one paſſes the night with his wife; they ſeparate again in the morning, and the two ſexes enjoy nothing in common, but their meals at moſt. This is the order, which, from its univerſality, appears to be moſt natural; and even in thoſe countries where it is perverted, we may perceive ſome veſtiges of it remaining. In France, where the men have ſubmitted to live after the faſhion of the women, and to be continually ſhut up in a room with them, you may perceive from their involuntary motions that they are under confinement. While the ladies ſit quietly, or loll upon their couch, you may perceive the men get up, go, come, and ſit down again, perpetually reſtleſs, as if a kind of mechanical inſtinct continually

nually counteracted the reſtraint they ſuffered, and prompted them, in their own deſpite, to that active and laborious life for which nature intended them They are the only people in the world where the men *ſtand* at the theatre, as if they went into the pit to relieve themſelves of the fatigue of having been ſitting all day in a dining-room. In ſhort, they are ſo ſenſible of the irkſomeneſs of this effeminate and ſedantry indolence, that in order to chequer it with ſome degree of activity at leaſt, they yield their places at home to ſtrangers, and go to other men's wives in order to alleviate their diſguſt!

The example of Mrs Wolmar's family contributes greatly to ſupport the maxim ſhe eſtabliſhes. Every one, as it were, being confined to their proper ſex, the women there live in a great meaſure apart from the men. In order to prevent any ſuſpicious connections between them, her great ſecret is to keep both one and the other conſtantly employed, for their occupations are ſo different, that nothing but idleneſs can bring them together. In the morning each apply to their proper buſineſs, and no one is at leiſure to interrupt the other. After dinner the men are employed in the garden, the yard, or in ſome other rural occupation the women are buſy in the nurſery till the hour comes at which they take a walk with the children, and ſometimes indeed with the miſtreſs, which is very agreeable to them, as it is the only time in which they take the air. The men being ſufficiently tired with their day's work,

have ſeldom any inclination to walk, and therefore reſt themſelves within doors

Every Sunday, after evening-ſervice, the women meet again in the nurſery, with ſome friend or relation whom they invite in their turns by Mrs Wolmar's conſent. There, they have a little collation prepared for them by Julia's direction; and ſhe permits them to chat, ſing, run, or play at ſome little game of ſkill, fit to pleaſe children, and ſuch as they may bear a part in themſelves. The entertainment is compoſed of ſyllabubs, cream, and different kinds of cakes, with ſuch other little viands as ſuit the taſte of women and children Wine is almoſt excluded, and the men, who are rarely admitted of this little female party, never are preſent at this collation, which Julia ſeldom miſſes. I am the only man who has obtained this privilege. Laſt Sunday, with great importunity, I got leave to attend her there. She took great pains to make me conſider it as a very ſingular favour She told me aloud that ſhe granted it for that once only, and that ſhe had even refuſed Mr Wolmar himſelf. You may imagine whether this difficulty of admiſſion does not flatter female vanity a little, and whether a footman would be a welcome viſitor where his maſter was excluded

I made a moſt delicious repaſt with them. Where will you find ſuch cream-cakes as we have hear? Imagine what they muſt be, made in a dairy where Julia preſides, and eaten in her company. Fanny preſented me with ſome cream, ſome ſeed-cake, and other little comfits All was gone in an inſtant. Julia ſmiled at

my appetite. I find, ſaid ſhe, giving me another plate of cream, that your appetite does you credit every-where, and that you make as good a figure among a club of females, as you do among the Valaiſans. But I do not, anſwered I, make the repaſt with more impunity, the one may be attended with intoxication as well as the other, and reaſon may be as much diſtracted in a nurſery, as in a wine-cellar She caſt her eyes down without making any reply, bluſhed, and began to play with her children. This was enough to ſting me with remorſe. This, my Lord, was my firſt indiſcretion, and I hope it will be the laſt.

There ſhone in this little aſſembly a certain air of primitive ſimplicity, which affected me very ſenſibly. I perceived the ſame chearfulneſs in every countenance, and perhaps more openneſs than if there had been men in company. The familiarity which was obſervable between the miſtreſs and her ſervants, being founded on ſincere attachment and confidence, only ſerved to eſtabliſh reſpect and authority, and the ſervices rendered and received, appeared like ſo many teſtimonies of reciprocal friendſhip. There was nothing, even to the very choice of the collation, but what contributed to make this aſſembly engaging Milk and ſugar are naturally adapted to the ſtate of the fair-ſex, and may be deemed the ſymbols of innocence and ſweetneſs, which are their moſt becoming ornaments. Men, on the contrary, are fond of high flavours, and ſtrong liquors; a kind of nouriſhment more ſuitable to the active and laborious life for which nature has deſigned them, and when theſe

different taſtes come to be blended, it is an infallible ſign that the diſtinction between the two ſexes is inordinately confounded. In fact, I have obſerved that in France, where the women conſtantly intermix with the men, they have entirely loſt their reliſh for milk meats, and the men have in ſome meaſure loſt their taſte for wine; and in England, where the two ſexes are better diſtinguiſhed, the proper taſte of each is better preſerved. In general, I am of opinion, that you may very often form ſome judgment of people's diſpoſition, from their choice of food. The Italians, who live a great deal on vegetables, are ſoft and effeminate. You Engliſhmen, who are great eaters of meat, have ſomething harſh in your rigid virtue, and which ſavours of barbariſm. The Swiſs, who is naturally of a calm, gentle, and cold conſtitution, but hot and violent when in a paſſion, is fond both of one and the other, and drinks milk and wine indiſcriminately. The Frenchman, who is pliant and changeable, lives upon all kinds of food, and conforms himſelf to every taſte. Julia herſelf may ſerve as an inſtance, for though ſhe makes her meals with a keen appetite, yet ſhe does not love meat, ragouts, or ſalt, and never yet taſted wine by itſelf. Some excellent roots, eggs, cream, and fruit, compoſe her ordinary diet, and was it not for fiſh, of which ſhe is likewiſe very fond, ſhe would be a perfect Pythagorean.

It would ſignify nothing to keep the women in order, if the men were not likewiſe under proper regulations: and this branch of domeſtic œconomy, which is not of leſs importance, is

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ſtill more difficult, for the attack is generally more lively than the defence the guardian of human nature intended it ſo. In the commonwealth, citizens are kept in order by principles of morality and virtue but how are we to keep ſervants and mercenaries under proper regulations, otherwiſe than by force and reſtraint? The art of a maſter conſiſts in diſguiſing this reſtraint under the veil of pleaſure and intereſt, that what they are obliged to do, may ſeem the reſult of their own inclination. Sunday being a day of idleneſs, and ſervants having a right of going where they pleaſe, when buſineſs does not require their duty at home, that one day often deſtroys all the good examples and leſſons of the other ſix The habit of frequenting public houſes, the converſe and maxims of their comrades, the company of looſe women, ſoon render them unſerviceable to their maſters, and unprofitable to themſelves, and by teaching them a thouſand vices, make them unfit for ſervitude, and unworthy of liberty.

To remedy this inconvenience, they endeavour to keep them at home by the ſame motives which induce them to go abroad. Why do they go abroad? To drink and play at a public houſe. They drink and play at home. All the difference is, that the wine coſts them nothing, that they do not get drunk, and that there are ſome winners at play without any loſers. The following is the method taken for this purpoſe.

Behind the houſe is a ſhady walk, where they have fixed the liſts. There, in the ſummer time, the livery ſervants and the men in the yard meet every Sunday after ſermon-time, to play in little

little detached parties; not for money, for it is not allowed; nor for wine, which is given them; but for a prize furniſhed by their maſter's generoſity: which is generally ſome piece of goods or apparel fit for their uſe. The number of games is in proportion to the value of the prize; ſo that when the prize is ſomewhat conſiderable, as a pair of ſilver buckles, a neckcloth, a pair of ſilk ſtockings, a fine hat, or any thing of that kind, they have generally ſeveral bouts to decide it. They are not confined to one particular game, but they change them, that one man, who happens to excel in a particular game, may not carry off all the prizes, and that they may grow ſtronger and more dextrous by a variety of exerciſes. At one time, the conteſt is who ſhall firſt reach a mark at the other end of the walk, at another time, it is who ſhall throw the ſame ſtone fartheſt, then again it is who ſhall carry the ſame weight longeſt. Sometimes they contend for a prize by ſhooting at a mark. Moſt of theſe games are attended with ſome little preparations, which ſerve to prolong them, and render them entertaining. Their maſter and miſtreſs often honour them with their preſence, they ſometimes take their children with them; nay, even ſtrangers reſort thither, excited by curioſity, and they deſire nothing better than to bear a ſhare in the ſport; but none are ever admitted without Mr Wolmar's approbation and the conſent of the players, who would not find their account in granting it readily This cuſtom has imperceptibly become a kind of ſhew, in which the actors, being animated by the preſence of the ſpectators, prefer the glory of ap-

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plauſe to the lucre of the reward. As theſe exerciſes make them more active and vigorous, they ſet a greater value on themſelves, and being accuſtomed to eſtimate their importance from their own intrinſic worth, rather than from their poſſeſſions, they prize honour, notwithſtanding they are footmen, beyond money.

It would be tedious to enumerate all the advantages which they derive from a practice ſo trifling in appearance, and which is always deſpiſed by little minds, but it is the prerogative of true genius to produce great effects by inconſiderable means Mr Wolmar has aſſured me that theſe little inſtitutions, which his wife firſt ſuggeſted, ſcarce ſtood him in fifty crowns a-year. But, ſaid he, how often do you think I am repaid this ſum in my houſe-keeping and my affairs in general, by the vigilance and attention with which I am ſerved by theſe faithful ſervants, who derive all their pleaſures from their maſter; by the intereſt they take in a family which they conſider as their own, by the advantage I reap, in their labours, from the vigour they acquire at their exerciſes, by the benefit of keeping them always in health, in preſerving them from thoſe exceſſes which are common to men in their ſtation, and from thoſe diſorders which frequently attend ſuch exceſſes, by ſecuring them from any propenſity to knavery, which is an infallible conſequence of irregularity, and by confirming them in the practice of honeſty, in ſhort, by the pleaſure of having ſuch agreeable recreations within ourſelves at ſuch a trifling expence? If there are any among them, either man or woman, who do not

care to conform to our regulations, but prefer the liberty of going where they please on various pretences, we never refuse to give them leave; but we consider this licentious turn as a very suspicious symptom, and we are always ready to mistrust such dispositions. Thus these little amusements which furnish us with good servants, serve also as a direction to us in the choice of them.—I must confess, my Lord, that, except in this family, I never saw the same men made good domestics for personal service, good husbandmen for tilling the ground, good soldiers for the defence of their country, and honest fellows in any station into which fortune may chance to throw them.

In the winter, their pleasures vary as well as their labours. On a Sunday, all the servants in the family, and even the neighbours, men and women indiscrimately, meet after service-time in a hall where there is a good fire, some wine, fruits, cakes, and a fiddle to which they dance. Mrs Wolmar never fails to be present for some time at least, in order to preserve decorum and modesty by her presence; and it is not uncommon for her to dance herself, though among her own people. When I was first made acquainted with this custom, it appeared to me not quite conformable to the strictness of Protestant morals. I told Julia so; and she answered me to the following effect:

Pure morality is charged with so many severe duties, that if it is overburdened with forms which are in themselves indifferent, they will always be of prejudice to what is really essential. This is said to be the case with the monks

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in general, who being ſlaves to rules totally immaterial, are utter ſtrangers to the meaning of honour and virtue. This defect is leſs obſervable among us, though we are not wholly exempt from it. Our churchmen, who are as much ſuperior to other prieſts in knowledge, as our religion is ſuperior to all others in purity, do nevertheleſs maintain ſome maxims, which ſeem to be rather founded on prejudice than reaſon. Of this kind, is that which condemns dancing and aſſemblies, as if there were more harm in dancing than ſinging, as if each of theſe amuſements were not equally a propenſity of nature, and as if it were a crime to divert ourſelves publickly with an innocent and harmleſs recreation. For my own part, I think, on the contrary, that every time there is a concourſe of the two ſexes, every public diverſion becomes innocent by being public; whereas the moſt laudable employment becomes ſuſpicious in a *tete-a-tete* party * Man and woman were formed for each other, their union by marriage is the end of nature. All falſe religion is at war with nature; ours which conforms to and rectifies natural propenſity, proclaims a divine inſtitution which is moſt ſuitable to mankind. Religion ought not to increaſe the embarraſſment which civil regulations throw in the way of matrimony, by difficulties which the goſpel does not create, and which are contrary to the true ſpirit

* In my Letter to Mr D'Alembert, concerning the theatres, I have tranſcribed the following paſſage and ſome others, but as I was then preparing this edition, I thought it better to delay making the acknowledgment till this publication

ſpirit of Chriſtianity. Let any one tell me where young people can have an opportunity of conceiving a mutual liking, and of ſeeing each other with more decorum and circumſpection, than in an aſſembly where the eyes of the ſpectators being conſtantly upon them, oblige them to behave with peculiar caution? How can we offend God by an agreeable and wholeſome exerciſe, ſuitable to the vivacity of youth, an exerciſe which conſiſts in the art of preſenting ourſelves to each other with grace and elegance, and wherein the preſence of the ſpectator impoſes a decorum which no one dares to violate? Can we conceive a more effectual method to avoid impoſition with reſpect to perſon at leaſt, by diſplaying ourſelves with all our natural graces and defects before thoſe whoſe intereſt it is to know us thoroughly, ere they oblige themſelves to love us? Is not the obligation of reciprocal affection greater than that of ſelf-love? and is it not an attention worthy of a pious and virtuous pair, who propoſe to marry, thus to prepare their hearts for that mutual love which is prompted by heaven.

What is the conſequence, in thoſe places where people are under a continual reſtraint, where the moſt innocent gaiety is puniſhed as criminal, where the young people of different ſexes dare not meet in public, and where the indiſcreet ſeverity of the paſtor preaches nothing, in the name of God, but ſervile conſtraint, ſadneſs, and melancholy? They find means to elude an inſufferable tyranny, which nature and reaſon diſavow. When gay and ſprightly youth are debarred from lawful pleaſures, they ſubſti-

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tute others more dangerous in their ſtead Private parties artfully concerted, ſupply the place of public aſſemblies By being obliged to concealment as if they were criminal, they at length become ſo in fact Harmleſs joy loves to diſplay itſelf in the face of the world, but vice is a friend to darkneſs, and innocence and ſecrecy never ſubſiſt long together. My dear friend, ſaid ſhe, graſping my hand, as if ſhe meant to convey her repentance, and communicate the purity of her own heart to mine, who can be more ſenſible of the importance of this truth than ourſelves? What ſorrow and troubles, what tears and remorſe we might have prevented for ſo many years paſt, if we could but have foreſeen how dangerous a private intercourſe was to that virtue which we always loved!

Beſides, ſaid Mrs Wolmar, in a ſofter tone, it is not in a numerous aſſembly, where we are ſeen and heard by all the world, but in private parties, where ſecrecy and freedom is indulged, that our morals are in danger. It is from this principle, that whenever my domeſtics meet, I am glad to ſee them all together. I even approve of their inviting ſuch young people in the neighbourhood whoſe company will not corrupt them, and I hear with pleaſure, that, when they mean to commend the morals of any of our young neighbours, they ſay,—He is admitted at Mr Wolmar's We have a farther view in this Our men-ſervants are all very young, and among the women, the governeſs is yet ſingle it is not reaſonable that the retired life they lead with us, ſhould debar them of an op-

portunity of forming an honeſt connection. We endeavour therefore, in theſe little meetings, to give them this opportunity, under our inſpection, that we may aſſiſt them in their choice, and thus by endeavouring to make happy families, we increaſe the felicity of our own.

I ought now to juſtify myſelf for dancing with theſe good people, but I rather chuſe to paſs ſentence on myſelf in this reſpect, and frankly acknowledge, that my chief motive is the pleaſure I take in the exerciſe. You know that I always reſembled my couſin in her paſſion for dancing, but after the death of my mother, I bade adieu for ever to the ball and all public aſſemblies I kept my reſolution, even to the day of my marriage; and will keep it ſtill, without thinking it any violation to dance now and then in my own houſe with my gueſts and my domeſtics It is an exerciſe very good for my health, during the ſedantary life which we are obliged to lead here in winter I find it an innocent amuſement, for after a good dance, my conſcience does not reproach me. It amuſes Mr Wolmar likewiſe, and all my coquetry in this particular is only to pleaſe him. I am the occaſion of his coming into the ball-room; the good people are beſt ſatisfied when they are honoured with their maſter's preſence; and they expreſs a ſatisfaction when they ſee me amongſt them In ſhort, I find that ſuch occaſioned familiarity forms an agreeable connection and attachment between us, which approaches nearer the natural condition of mankind, by moderating the meanneſs of ſervitude and the rigour of authority

Such,

Such, my Lord, are the ſentiments of Julia, with reſpect to dancing, and I have often wondered how ſo much affability could conſiſt with ſuch a degree of ſubordination, and how ſhe and her huſband could ſo often ſtoop to level themſelves with their ſervants, and yet the latter never be tempted to aſſume equality in their turn. I queſtion if any Aſiatic monarchs are attended in their palaces with more reſpect, than Mr and Mrs Wolmar are ſerved in their own houſe. I never knew any commands leſs imperious than theirs, or more readily executed. If they aſk for any thing, their ſervants fly, if they excuſe their failings, they themſelves are nevertheleſs ſenſible of their faults. I was never better convinced how much the force of what is ſaid, depends on the mode of expreſſion.

This has led me into a reflection on the affected gravity of maſters, which is, that it is rather to be imputed to their own failings, than to the effects of their familiarity, that they are deſpiſed in their families, and that the inſolence of ſervants is rather an indication of a vicious than of a weak maſter: for nothing gives them ſuch aſſurance, as the knowledge of his vices; and they conſider all diſcoveries of that kind as ſo many diſpenſations, which free them from their obedience to a man whom they can no longer reſpect.

Servants imitate their maſters, and by copying them awkwardly, they render thoſe defects more conſpicuous in themſelves, which the poliſh of education, in ſome meaſure, diſguiſed in the others. At Paris, I uſed to judge of the

ladies of my acquaintance, by the air and manners of their waiting-women, and this rule never deceived me Beſides that the lady's woman, when ſhe becomes the confident of her miſtreſs's ſecrets, makes her buy her diſcretion at a dear rate, ſhe likewiſe frames her conduct according to her lady's ſentiments, and diſcloſes all her maxims by an awkward imitation In every inſtance, the maſter's example is more efficacious than his authority, it is not natural to ſuppoſe that their ſervants will be honeſter than themſelves It is to no purpoſe to make a rule, to ſwear, to abuſe them, to turn them off, to get a new ſet, all this avails nothing towards making good ſervants. When they, who do not trouble themſelves about being hated and deſpiſed by their domeſtics, nevertheleſs imagine that they are well ſerved, the reaſon of their miſtake is, that they are contented with what they ſee, and ſatisfied with an appearance of diligence, without obſerving the thouſand ſecret prejudices they ſuffer continually, and of which they cannot diſcover the ſource But where is the man ſo devoid of honour, as to be able to endure the contempt of every one round him? Where is the woman ſo abandoned, as not to be ſuſceptible of inſults? How many ladies, both at Paris and in London, who think themſelves greatly reſpected, would burſt into tears if they heard what was ſaid of them in their own chambers? Happily for their peace, they comfort themſelves by taking theſe Argуſes for weak creatures, and by flattering themſelves that they are blind to thoſe practices which they do not even deign to hide from them. They likewiſe

wiſe in their turn diſcover, by their ſullen obedience, the contempt they have for their miſtreſſes Maſters and ſervants become mutually ſenſible, that it is not worth their while to conciliate each other's eſteem.

The behaviour of ſervants ſeems to me to be the moſt certain and nice proof of the maſter's virtue, and I remember, my Lord, to have formed a good opinion of yours at Valais without knowing you, purely becauſe, though you ſpoke ſomewhat harſhly to your attendants, they were not the leſs attached to you, and that they expreſſed as much reſpect for you in your abſence, as if you had been within hearing It has been ſaid, that no man is a hero in the eyes of his Valet de Chambre, perhaps not, but every worthy man will enjoy his ſervant's eſteem, which ſufficiently proves that heroiſm is only a vain phantom, and that nothing is ſolid but virtue. The power of its empire is particularly obſervable here in the loweſt commendations of the ſervants, commendations the leſs to be ſuſpected, as they do not conſiſt of vain eulogiums, but of an artleſs expreſſion of their feelings As they cannot ſuppoſe, from any thing which they ſee, that other maſters are not like theirs, they therefore do not commend them on account of thoſe virtues which they conceive to be common to maſters in general, but in the ſimplicity of their hearts, they thank God for having ſent the rich to make thoſe under them happy, and to be a comfort to the poor

Servitude is a ſtate ſo unnatural to mankind, that it cannot ſubſiſt without ſome degree of diſcontent. Nevertheleſs, they reſpect their ma-

ſter, and ſay nothing. If any murmurings eſcape them againſt their miſtreſs, they are more to her honour than encomiums would be. No one complains that ſhe is wanting in kindneſs to them, but that ſhe pays ſo much regard to others, no one can endure that his zeal ſhould be put in competition with that of his comrades, and as every one imagines himſelf foremoſt in attachment, he would be firſt in favour. This is their only complaint, and their greateſt injuſtice

There is not only a proper ſubordination among thoſe of inferior ſtation, but a perfect harmony among thoſe of equal rank, and this is not the leaſt difficult part of domeſtic œconomy Amidſt the claſhings of jealouſy and ſelf-intereſt, which make continual diviſions in families not more numerous than this, we ſeldom find ſervants united but at the expence of their maſters. If they agree, it is to rob in concert, if they are honeſt, every one ſhews his importance at the expence of the reſt they muſt either be enemies or accomplices, and it is very difficult to find a way of guarding at the ſame time both againſt their knavery and their diſſentions The maſters of families in general know no other method but that of chuſing the alternative between theſe two inconveniences. Some preferring intereſt to honour, foment a quarrelſome diſpoſition among their ſervants by means of private reports, and think it a maſterpiece of prudence to make them ſuperintendants and ſpies over each other. Others of a more indolent nature, rather chuſe that their ſervants ſhould rob them, and live peaceably among them-

themſelves, they pique themſelves upon diſcountenancing any information which a faithful ſervant may give them out of pure zeal. Both are equally to blame. The firſt by exciting continual diſturbances in their families, which are incompatible with good order and regularity, get together a heap of knaves and informers, who are buſy in betraying their fellow-ſervants, that they may hereafter perhaps betray their maſters. The ſecond, by refuſing any information with regard to what paſſes in their families, countenance combinations againſt themſelves, encourage the wicked, diſhearten the good, and only maintain a pack of arrogant and idle raſcals at a great expence, who, agreeing together at their maſter's coſt, look upon their ſervice as a matter of favour, and their thefts as perquiſites *.

It is a great error in domeſtic as well as in civil œconomy to oppoſe one vice to another, or to attempt an equilibrium between them, as if that which ſaps the foundation of all order, could ever tend to eſtabliſh regularity This miſtaken policy only ſerves to unite every inconvenience. When particular vices are tolerated in a family, they do not reign alone Let one take root, a thouſand will ſoon ſpring up They preſently ruin

* I have narrowly examined into the management of great families, and have found it impoſſible for a maſter who has twenty ſervants, to know whether he has one honeſt man among them, and not to miſtake the greateſt raſcal perhaps to be that one This alone would give me an averſion to riches. The rich loſe one of the ſweeteſt pleaſures of life, the pleaſure of confidence and eſteem They purchaſe all their gold at a dear rate!

ruin the ſervants who harbour them, undo the maſter who tolerates them, and corrupt or injure the children who remark them with attention. What father can be ſo unworthy as to put any advantage whatever in competition with this laſt inconvenience? What honeſt man would chuſe to be maſter of a family, if it was impoſſible for him to maintain peace and fidelity in his houſe at the ſame time, and if he muſt be obliged to purchaſe the attachment of his ſervants at the expence of their mutual good underſtanding?

Who does not ſee, that in this family, they have not even an idea of any ſuch difficulty? ſo much does the union among the ſeveral members proceed from their attachment to the head It is here we may perceive a ſtriking inſtance, how impoſſible it is to have a ſincere affection for a maſter without loving every thing that belongs to him, a truth which is the real foundation of Chriſtian charity. Is it not very natural that the children of the ſame father ſhould live together like brethren? This is what they tell us every day at church, without making us feel the ſentiment, and this is what the domeſtics in this family feel, without being told it

This diſpoſition to good fellowſhip is owing to a choice of proper ſubjects Mr Wolmar, when he hires his ſervants, does not examine only whether they ſuit his wife and himſelf, but whether they ſuit each other, and if they were to diſcover a ſettled antipathy between two of the beſt ſervants, it would be ſufficient for them to diſcharge one for, ſays Julia, in ſo ſmall a family, a family where they never go abroad,

but

but are conſtantly before each other, they ought to agree perfectly among themſelves They ought to conſider it as their father's houſe, where all are of the ſame family One who happens to be diſagreeable to the reſt, is enough to make them hate the place, and that diſagreeable object being conſtantly before their eyes, they would neither be eaſy themſelves, nor ſuffer us to be quiet.

After having made the beſt aſſortment in their power, they unite them as it were by the ſervices which they oblige each to render the other, and they contrive that it ſhall be the real intereſt of every one to be beloved by his fellow-ſervants. No one is ſo well received who ſolicits a favour for himſelf, as when he aſks it for another, ſo that whoever has any thing to requeſt, endeavours to engage another to intercede for him, and this they do with greater readineſs, ſince, whether their maſter grants or refuſes the favour requeſted, he never fails to acknowledge the merit of the perſon who makes the interceſſion. On the contrary, both he and Mrs Wolmar always reject the ſolicitations of thoſe who only regard themſelves Why, ſay they, ſhould I grant what is deſired in your favour, who have never made me any requeſt in favour of another? Is it reaſonable, that you ſhould be more favoured than your companions, becauſe they are more obliging than you? They do more, they engage them to ſerve each other in private, without any oſtentation, and without aſſuming any merit. This is the more eaſily accompliſhed, as they know that their maſter, who is witneſs of their diſcretion, will eſteem them

them the more thus ſelf-intereſt is a gainer, and ſelf-love no loſer. They are ſo convinced of this general diſpoſition to oblige, and they have ſuch confidence in each other, that when they have any favour to aſk, they frequently mention it at table by way of converſation, very often without further trouble, they find that the thing has been requeſted and granted, and as they do not know whom to thank, their obligation is to all.

It is by this, and ſuch like methods, that they beget an attachment among them, reſulting from, and ſubordinate to, the zeal they have for their maſter. Thus, far from leaguing together to his prejudice, they are only united for his ſervice. However it may be their intereſt to love each other, they have ſtill ſtronger motives for pleaſing him, their zeal for his ſervice gets the better of their mutual good-will, and each conſidering himſelf as injured by loſſes which may make their maſter leſs able to recompenſe a faithful ſervant, they are all equally incapable of ſuffering any individual to do him wrong unnoticed. This principle of policy, which is eſtabliſhed in this family, ſeems to have ſomewhat ſurprized me at firſt, and I cannot ſufficiently admire how Mr. and Mrs. Wolmar have been able to transform the vile function of an informer into an office of zeal, integrity, and courage, as noble, or at leaſt as praiſe-worthy, as it was among the Romans.

They began by ſubverting, or rather by preventing, in a plain and perſpicuous manner, and by affecting inſtances, that ſervile and criminal practice, that mutual toleration at the maſter's coſt, which a worthleſs ſervant never

fails to inculcate to a good one, under the maſk of a charitable maxim. They made them underſtand, that the precept which enjoins us to hide our neighbour's faults, relates to thoſe only which do injury to no one, that if they are witneſſes to any injuſtice which injures a third perſon, and do not diſcover it, they are guilty of it themſelves; and that as nothing can oblige us to conceal ſuch faults in others, but a conſciouſneſs of our own defects, therefore no one would chuſe to countenance knaves, if he was not a knave himſelf. Upon theſe principles, which are juſt in general, as between man and man, but more ſtrictly ſo with reſpect to the cloſe connection between maſter and ſervant, they hold it here as an unconteſtable truth, that whoever ſees their maſter wronged, without making a diſcovery, is more guilty than he who did the wrong; for he ſuffers himſelf to be miſled by the proſpect of advantage, but the other in cool blood, and without any view of intereſt, can be induced to ſecrecy by no other motive than a thorough diſregard to juſtice, an indifference towards the welfare of the family he ſerves, and a hidden deſire of copying the example he conceals. Therefore, even where the fault is conſiderable, the guilty party may nevertheleſs ſometimes hope for pardon, but the witneſs who conceals the fact, is infallibly diſmiſſed as a man of a bad diſpoſition.

In return, they receive no accuſation which may be ſuſpected to proceed from injuſtice and calumny, that is to ſay, they admit of none in the abſence of the accuſed. If any one comes to make a report againſt his fellow-ſervant, or

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to prefer a perſonal complaint againſt him, they aſk him whether he is ſufficiently informed, that is to ſay, whether he has entered into any previous inquiry with the perſon whom he is going to accuſe If he anſwers in the negative, they aſk him how he can judge of an action, when he is not acquainted with the motives to it? The fact, ſay they, may depend on ſome circumſtance to which you are a ſtranger; there may be ſome particulars which may ſerve to juſtify or excuſe it, and which you know nothing of. How can you preſume to condemn any one's conduct, before you know by what motives it is directed? One word of explanation would probably have rendered it juſtifiable in your eyes. Why then do you run the riſque of condemning an action wrongfully, and of expoſing me to participate of your injuſtice? If he aſſures them, that he has entered into a previous explanation with the accuſed why then, ſay they, do you come without him, as if you was afraid that he would falſify what you are going to relate? By what right do you neglect taking the ſame precaution with reſpect to me, which you think proper to uſe with regard to yourſelf? Is it reaſonable to deſire me to judge of a fact from your report, of which you refuſe to judge yourſelf by the teſtimony of your own eyes? and would not you be anſwerable for the partial judgment I might form, if I was to remain ſatisfied with your bare depoſition? In the end, they direct them to ſummon the party accuſed, if they conſent, the matter is ſoon decided, if they refuſe, they diſmiſs them with a ſevere reprimand, but they keep the ſecret and

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watch them both ſo narrowly, that they are not long at a loſs to know which of the two was in the wrong.

This rule is ſo well known and ſo well eſtabliſhed, that you never hear a ſervant in this family ſpeak ill of his abſent comrade, for they are all ſenſible that it is the way to paſs for a liar and a coward. When any one of them accuſes another, it is openly, frankly, and not only to his face, but in the preſence of all his fellow-ſervants, that they who are witneſſes to their accuſation, may be vouchers of their integrity. In caſe of any perſonal diſputes among them, the difference is generally made up by mediators without troubling Mr and Mrs Wolmar. but when the intereſt of the maſter is at ſtake, the matter cannot remain a ſecret, the guilty party muſt either accuſe himſelf, or be accuſed These little pleadings happen very ſeldom, and never but at table, in the rounds which Julia makes every day while her people are at dinner or ſupper, which Mr Wolmar pleaſantly calls her general ſeſſions After having patiently attended to the accuſation and the defence, if the affairs regard her intereſt, ſhe thanks the accuſer for his zeal. I am ſenſible, ſays ſhe, that you have a regard for your fellow-ſervant, you have always ſpoken well of him, and I commend you, becauſe the love of your duty and of juſtice has prevailed over your private affections, it is thus that a faithful ſervant and an honeſt man ought to behave If the party accuſed is not in fault, ſhe always ſubjoins ſome compliment to her juſtification of his innocence. But if he is really guilty, ſhe in ſome

meaſure ſpares his ſhame before the reſt She ſuppoſes that he has ſomething to communicate in his defence, which he does not chuſe to declare in public, ſhe appoints an hour to hear him in private, and it is then that ſhe or her huſband talk to him as they think proper. What is very remarkable is, that the moſt ſevere of the two is not moſt dreaded, and that they are leſs afraid of Mr Wolmar's ſolemn reprimand, than of Julia's affecting reproaches. The former ſpeaking the language of truth and juſtice, humbles and confounds the guilty; the latter ſtrikes them with the moſt cruel remorſe, by convincing them with what regret ſhe is forced to withdraw her kindneſs from them. She ſometimes extorts tears of grief and ſhame from them, and it is not uncommon for her to be moved herſelf when ſhe ſees them repent, in hopes that ſhe may not be obliged to abide by her word.

They who judge of theſe concerns by what paſſes in their own families, or among their neighbours, would probably deem them frivolous or tireſome. But you, my Lord, who have ſuch high notions of the duties and enjoyments of a maſter of a family, and who are ſenſible what an aſcendency natural diſpoſition and virtue have over the human heart, you perceive the importance of theſe minutiæ, and know on what circumſtances their ſucceſs depends. Riches do not make a man rich, as is well obſerved in ſome romance The wealth of a man is not in his coffers, but in the uſe he makes of what he draws out of them, for our poſſeſſions do not become our own, but by the

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uſes to which we allot them, and abuſes are always more inexhauſtible than riches; whence it happens that our enjoyments are not in proportion to our expences, but depend on the juſt regulation of them. An ideot may toſs ingots of gold into the ſea, and ſay he has enjoyed them: but what compariſon is there between ſuch an extravagant enjoyment, and that which a wiſe man would have derived from the leaſt part of their value? Order and regularity, which multiply and perpetuate the uſe of riches, are alone capable of converting the enjoyment of them into felicity. But if real property ariſes from the relation which our poſſeſſions bear to us, if it is rather the uſe than the acquiſition of riches which confers it, what can be more proper ſubjects of attention for a maſter of a family than domeſtic œconomy, and the good government of his houſehold, in which the moſt perfect correſpondences more immediately concern him, and where the happineſs of every individual is an addition to his own as the head?

Are the moſt wealthy the moſt happy? No. How then does wealth contribute to felicity? But every well-regulated family is emblematic of the maſter's mind. Gilded cielings, luxury, and magnificence, only ſerve to ſhew the vanity of thoſe who diſplay ſuch parade; whereas, whenever you ſee order without melancholy, peace without ſlavery, plenty without profuſion, you may ſay with confidence, The maſter of this houſe is a happy being.

For my own part, I think the moſt certain ſign of true content is a domeſtic and retired life, and that they who are continually reſorting

to others in queſt of happineſs, do not enjoy it at home. A father of a family who amuſes himſelf at home, is rewarded for his continual attention to domeſtic concerns, by the conſtant enjoyment of the moſt agreeable ſenſations of nature. He is the only one who can be properly ſaid to be maſter of his own happineſs, becauſe, like heaven itſelf, he is happy in deſiring nothing more that he enjoys. Like the Supreme Being, he does not wiſh to enlarge his poſſeſſions, but to make them really his own, under proper directions, and by uſing them conformably to the juſt relations of things: if he does not enrich himſelf by new acquiſitions, he enriches himſelf by the true enjoyment of what he poſſeſſes. He once only enjoyed the income of his lands; he now enjoys the lands themſelves, by overlooking their culture, and ſurveying them from time to time. His ſervant was a ſtranger to him. he is now part of his enjoyment; his child, he makes him his own. Formerly he had only power over his ſervant's actions; now he has authority over his inclinations. He was his maſter only by paying him wages; now he rules by the ſacred dominion of benevolence and eſteem. Though fortune ſpoils him of his wealth, ſhe can never rob him of thoſe affections which are attached to him, ſhe cannot deprive a father of his children; all the difference is, that he maintained them yeſterday, and that they will ſupport him to-morrow. It is thus that we may learn the true enjoyment of our riches, of our family, and of ourſelves, it is thus that the minutiæ of a family become agreeable to a worthy man who knows their value,

lue, it is thus that, far from regarding theſe little duties as troubleſome, he makes them a part of his happineſs, and derives the glory and pleaſure of human nature from theſe noble and affecting offices.

If theſe precious advantages are deſpiſed or little known, and if the few who endeavour to acquire them ſeldom obtain them, the reaſon, in both caſes, is the ſame. There are many ſimple and ſublime duties, which few people can reliſh and fulfil. Such are thoſe of the maſter of a family, for which the air and buſtle of the world give him a diſguſt, and which he never diſcharges properly when he is only inflamed by motives of avarice and intereſt. Some think themſelves excellent maſters, and are only careful œconomiſts, their income may thrive, and their family nevertheleſs be in a bad condition. They ought to have more enlarged views to direct an adminiſtration of ſuch importance, ſo as to give it a happy iſſue. The firſt thing to be attended to in the due regulation of a family, is to admit none but honeſt people, who will not have any ſecret intention to diſturb that regularity. But are honeſty and ſervitude ſo compatible, that we may hope to find ſervants who are honeſt men? No, my Lord, if we would have them, we muſt not inquire for them, but we muſt make them, and none who are not men of integrity themſelves, are capable of making others honeſt. It is to no purpoſe for a hypocrite to affect an air of virtue, he will never inſpire any one with an affection for it, and if he knew how to make virtue amiable, he would be in love with it himſelf. What do formal

leſſons avail, when daily example contradicts them, unleſs to make us ſuſpect that the moraliſt means to ſport with our credulity? What an abſurdity are they guilty of who exhort us to do as they ſay, and not as they act themſelves! He who does not act up to what he ſays, never ſpeaks to any effect; for the language of the heart is wanting, which alone is perſuaſive and affecting. I have ſometimes heard converſations of this kind held in a groſs manner before ſervants, in order to read them lectures, as they do to children ſometimes, in an indirect way. Far from having any reaſon to imagine that they were the dupes of ſuch artifice, I have always obſerved them ſmile in ſecret at the folly of their maſter, who muſt have taken them for blockheads, by making an aukward diſplay of ſentiments before them, which they knew were none of his own.

All theſe idle ſubtleties are unknown in this family, and the grand art by which the maſter and miſtreſs make their ſervants what they would deſire them to be, is to appear themſelves before them what they really are. Their behaviour is always frank and open, becauſe they are not in any fear leſt their actions ſhould belie their profeſſions. As they themſelves do not entertain principles of morality different from thoſe which they inculcate to others, they have no occaſion for any extraordinary circumſpection in their diſcourſe, a word blundered out unſeaſonably, does not overthrow the principles they have laboured to eſtabliſh. They do not indiſcreetly tell all their affairs, but they openly proclaim all their maxims. Whether at table, or abroad,

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in private, or in public, their ſentiments are ſtill the ſame. they ingenuouſly deliver their opinions on every ſubject; and without their having any individual in view, every one is inſtructed by their converſation. As their ſervants never ſee them do any thing but what is juſt, reaſonable and equitable, they do not conſider juſtice as a tax on the poor, as a yoke on the unhappy, and as one of the evils of their condition. The care they take never to let the labourers come in vain, and loſe their day's work in ſeeking after their wages, teaches their ſervants to ſet a juſt value on time. When they ſee their maſter ſo careful of other mens time, each concludes that his own time muſt be of conſequence, and therefore deems idleneſs the greateſt crime he can be guilty of. The confidence which their ſervants have in their integrity, gives that force to their regulations which makes them obſerved, and prevents abuſes. They are not afraid, when they come to receive their weekly gratuities, that their miſtreſs ſhould partially determine the youngeſt and moſt active to have been the moſt diligent. An old ſervant is not apprehenſive leſt they ſhould ſtart ſome quibble, to ſave the promiſed augmentation to their wages. They can never hope to take advantage of any diviſion between their maſter and miſtreſs, in order to make themſelves of conſequence, and to obtain from one what the other has refuſed. They who are unmarried, are not afraid leſt they ſhould oppoſe their ſettlement, in order to detain them longer, and by that means make their ſervice a prejudice to them. If a ſtrange ſervant was to tell the domeſtics of this family, that maſter and

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ſervants are in a ſtate of war with each other; that when the latter do the former all the injury they can, they only make lawful repriſals; that maſters being uſurpers, liars, and knaves, there can conſequently be no harm in uſing them as they uſe their prince, the people, or individuals, and in returning thoſe injuries with dexterity which they offer openly,——one who ſhould talk in this manner would not be attended to, they would not give themſelves the trouble to controvert or obviate ſuch ſentiments; they who give riſe to them, are the only perſons whoſe buſineſs it is to refute them.

You never perceive any ſullenneſs or diſcontent in the diſcharge of their duty, becauſe there is never any haughtineſs or capriciouſneſs in the orders they receive; nothing is required of them but what is reaſonable and expedient, and their maſter and miſtreſs have too much reſpect for the dignity of human nature, even in a ſtate of ſervitude, to put them upon any employment which may debaſe them Moreover, nothing here is reckoned mean but vice, and whatever is reaſonable and neceſſary, is deemed honourable and becoming.

They do not allow of any intrigues abroad, neither has any one any inclinations of that kind They are ſenſible that their fortune is moſt firmly attached to that of their maſter, and that they ſhall never want any thing while his family proſpers Therefore in ſerving him, they take care of their own patrimony, and increaſe it by making their ſervice agreeable, this above all things is their intereſt. But this word is ſomewhat miſapplied here; for I never knew a-

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ny ſyſtem of policy by which ſelf-intereſt was ſo ſkilfully directed, and where at the ſame time it had leſs influence than in this family They all act from a principle of attachment; and one would think that venal ſouls were purified as ſoon as they entered into this dwelling of wiſdom and union One would imagine that part of the maſter's intelligence, and of the miſtreſs's ſenſibility, was conveyed to each of their ſervants, they ſeem ſo judicious, benevolent, honeſt, and ſo much above their ſtation. Their greateſt ambition is to do well, to be valued and eſteemed, and they conſider an obliging expreſſion from their maſter or miſtreſs, in the light of a gift.

Theſe, my Lord, are the moſt material obſervations I have made on that part of the œconomy of this family, which regards the ſervants and labourers As to Mr and Mrs Wolmar's manner of living, and the education of their children, each of theſe articles very well deſerves a ſeparate letter You know with what view I began theſe remarks, but in truth the whole forms ſuch an agreeable repreſentation, that we need only meditate upon it to advance it, and we require no other inducement than the pleaſure it affords us.

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